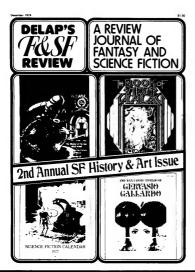


no. 8 Spring 1977

SF IN REVIEW

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SPECIAL TED WHITE ISSUE



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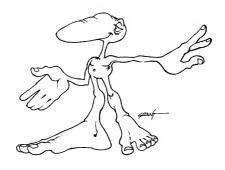
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THRUST where.



## 2THRUST EDITORIAL STORY -by doug fratz-

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE:

Born and raised in the small town of Accident, Maryland, young science fiction reader Doug Fratz discovered fandom in 1967 and became active in many areas while still in high school. But he then cut down his fannish activities in preparation of a brilliant career in chemistry at the University of Maryland. In just a few years, he helped establish the University of Maryland Science Fiction Society, and finding his creative urges crying for release, started a university of magazine, Thrust, using his own funds. He continued for a year and a half without university funding, then graduated. His long line of successors managed one issue in the next two years, even though his indignance at the lack of funding during his editorship helped the magazine actually get funded during those years. The UMSFS asked him back to finish an issue trat had languished over a year in incompletion. Finding his creative juices again stirring, he knew that he once again must continue the magazine. But the UMSFS was geing through a strange metamorphis, and our young editor Was getting into more than he had bargained for.

Ah, yes, but seriously. Sefore I start my story, I'd like to welcome everyone to this issue of firmust, the first in a new direction for the magazine. There was alot of confusion generated by my editorial last issue, because it was written at a time when the future of this magazine was very such in doubt. To clear this all up, I think I'd better start at the beginning and tell the complete story of the history of firmust.

The University of Maryland Science Fiction Society was formed in the fall of 1972, the main reason being that there were six or eight of readers on campus who were willing to attend weekly meetings. I was one. After a few months of doing nothing, I suggested we do a nearezine.

The problem was in the "we".

Only one person other than myself had even seen a funcine, and no one else had any idea how to go about producing one. The general opinion was that it couldn't be done, especially since the club had no soney and of feasible ideas for making any. I knew I could do it, so I did. I was very ready to get tack into publishing and editing. I had gotten into fandon in late 1967, and was splitting my fannish effort about 75:25 between conics fandon and sf fandos. Except for a year in APA L (the los Angeles Science Fiction Society apa.) I had done all of my fanzine publishing in comics fandom. Most notably, I did sax issues of <u>Comicology</u>, which was considered by any of the comic fandom of the comic fandom of the comic fandom was considered by a comic fantom of the comic fandom was considered by a comic fantom of the com

career in chemistry, I found more than I had bargained for, and most of it wasn't chemistry. All my publishing, editing and writing stopped. I didn't really leave fandom, but rather just reduced myself to observer statis.

So I jusped at the chance to get back into publishing, editing and writing. It was some than anything else an effort to rejoin the dichotomy of my life at that point. I was finally becoming confortable with college life, and I now could integrate this with that with which I was formerly sock confortable.

And I finally would be doing an sf magazine.

I can see now that I had been afraid to do an afmagazine earlier. Within a couple of years, I had been able to become a middle-league Big Name Fan in contos fundom, but I could see from the start that it would take many years of work to get known and respected in af fandom. I hadn't the ego to publish in af francios. But college of magazine, and my main audience would be a group of peers within which I was not at the bottom.

I insediately set about creating <a href="Througy#1">Througy#1</a>. I grabbed a Morris Scott Dollens painting off the wall for a cover, as well as a lot of other artwork from my collection, talked a few members of the club into writing some fiction and articles, and wrote alot myself. I hustical das from a few many content of the cont

I had managed to make <u>Thrust</u> the only campus magazine not funded by the university. I had also managed to publish <u>Thrust</u> on less than one tenth the budget of any other campus publication, and the next step was to try to get funding on this evidence. And I tried hard.

honest.

It was at that the that I got my first real look into Local Politics, and I didn't like what I saw. I didn't get funding for the next year. I found that every campus publication was run by Maryland Media, an independent organization owned off-compus, and funded by the university. I wasn't about to publish under the control of a large organization, and the Student Coverment Asso-

ciation refused to fund me as an outside publication.
The other members thought it was all over at this point, a noble experiment that failed. The club had no money, other than what I had made last year. But I was angry, and there's no power stranger than the ire of a young idealist faced with his first personal contact with bureaucratic corruption. I gathered all my money together and prepared to continue Thrust at twice the former budget, with wrap-around offset, interior photos and a 1000 print run. I published three issues that year, and I think they hold up very well, even today. I put almost a week per issue into local and campus distribution, wholesaleing to as many as 30 stores all the way from northern Virginia to Baltimore, seventy miles apart. using up as much gas as I could afford to buy. In the last issue, I wrote a terse, scathing indictment of the Student Government Association and Maryland Media. That was 1974.

Then I graduated.

I had always planned to give up editorship when I graduated, of course. With the last issue I edited, instead of doing the whole thing specif, I paintakingly taught several members how to produce a magazine, coing through all the steps of the process with them, from any the step of the process with them, from any the step of the process with them, from any the step of the process with the step of the process with the process with the step of the process with the process of the process with the process of the process with the process of the

I had grand illusions of having created an institution and adynasty. I picked my successors and was confident of their success. I left them with all that I could teach them, and my public display of soral outrage was sure to guarantee the magazine funding for the next year (and it did.)

Also, once again I was entering a completely new and unknown period of my life, that of a professional, and I wanted to take as little with me as possible. I was glad to see Thrust move on to other hands.

But the best laid plans of mice and editors often

fuck up.

I had handed the magazine over to Chris Lampton, but he then noved away from the area for awhile and soon realized that it was impractical to try to edit from afar. Steve Goldstein was talked into doing the magazine them, and got out an issue—in the wake of Discon II, the World Science Piction Convention hald in Mashington—at the Science Piction Convention hald in Mashington—at the another issue, but soon after, Dennis Bailey showed up and took over Thrust.

I never really left the club during this time. (The members were never fannishly oriented enough to call thesselves "unefus" and I never pushed it. We were "the club".) I sheped interview Harlane Elisson at Discon II, and attended meetings off and on throughout the fall of 1974. Then, at the start of 1975, the club decided we

should put on a con.

There was again a bit of a problem with the "we". I was the only member with any extensive convention experience. I had, by that time, attended over thirty come and helped put on a few conics conventions while still in college. No other member had attended more than a few come, some none at all. It was decided to call the combination of the contract of the contrac

Unicon I was only moderately successful, mostly due to an extremely poor publicity job. Officially, I ran the huckster's room and edited the program book, but I ended up getting my hands dirty with just about every aspect of the con. I think we brook even with the ven-



SF IN REVIEW 5

ture, but the treasurer never bothered to go over the books. if he had even kept any.

The club thought Unicon I was successful enough, though, to ismediately begin plans for Unicon II 'in October, taking the big step of going off campus to a hotel. I wasn't very excited about working on another con so soon, so I did virtually nothing. But I did stick around to watch, as what was happening was rather interesting.

to ward, as when a trangenting, who meetings there. Windown is not needings there is uniform I, one of whose helped on the first con, and both of whose I had worked with on comics conventions previously. No one slee in the club really knew then. They were the main impetus in planning the next Unicon so soon, and within a few weeks were basically running the show. It wasn't just that they were coming on so strong; it was also that the 'club wasn o' whiny-washy. I took the oppurturity to take a rather evil attitude and sit back and the companion of the control of the cont

That Unicon II never happened. The hotel, the Lanhan Ramada Inn, backed out a month before the con. The two fans who had "invaded" the club Yaded away, and never showed up again. Yet, within a few months, the club was talking about trying it again, this time back at the University. I cautiously joined in, in what I thought

would be an advising capacity.

It was at this time that I started noticing a change in the club, which had always been a rather nice, if somewhat inept, loosely knit group of friends. Ted White had accepted as GoH at the first Unicon II, and I, of course, assumed that Ted would still be GoH. However, a relatively new member of the club who had started to attend sometime before Unicon I, had handled the film program at that con, but knew virtually nothing about either sf or fandom, decided to take the places of the two who had been throwing their weight around before. and started taking control himself. He didn't want Ted White to be GoH. I argued, but lost. He managed to get most of the club behind him, by force of rhetoric, aided by the fact that I didn't want to get too involved with Unicon at the time. Since I had the most contacts. I was asked to find another GcH, and decided I may as well handle the whole thing myself; in anticipation of having to tell Ted he wasn't GoH anymore, I wanted to get someone of high stature in hopes of lessening the insult to Ted. I picked out eight or nine major authors living within 500 miles, the club voted to ask L. Sprague and Catherine de Camp, I did and they accepted. As a compromise, I in-sisted that Ted White be listed as "Special Guest." (The de Camps were excellent Guests of Honor, incidentally, and I enjoyed their company very much; they are both genuinely warm and kind people. I only regret that they were, even in such a small way, involved in such an unpleasant episode.) I put off telling Ted White for a week or two, and in the mean time came up with an idea to further help salve the wounds: a friar's roast honoring Ted. Luckily, Ted took the whole thing rather well.

Little by little, I began to get sucked in again, and this time it was going to make my work on Unicon I look like a weekend cruise. I started off by agreeing to coedit the program book and advise the head of the huckster room. Then I agreed to handle the Guest of Honor arrangements start to finish, and pull off the Ted White Roast. Needless to say, by a month before the con, I was sole editor of the program book, sole head of the huckster room, sole party organizer (including pre-con publicity parties at other cons.) and co-organizer of the program, doing 90% of all that work myself. (In case you're counting, that leaves the art show, films, publicity keeping financial records and university liason; thank ghod I didn't have to do those jobs too! ) As it was. I spent well over 250 hours working on Unicon II, 100 of them in the last week, taking off a total of seven days vacation time from my regular job. Some vacation,

Still, I can't help feeling that all that time and effort did pay off. Unicon II was a great success, with over WOO people, even though two other major conventions, one comics and one Star Trex, decided to schedule the same weekend within a few alles of us. I took particular pride in the Ted White Rosat, which I ended up totally conceiving and executing, and was attended by close to 400 fams. It was my first and only stab at a stand-up comedian routine in front of that many people. (I think that such events are tallow-made for fandos and conventions, and hope that the friar's roast concept will work its way into faminish tradition.)

During the whole period of preparation for Union II, however, the previously mentioned member who objected to Tod White as GOH was gaining more and some control and power in the club. He had previously incorporated Union, using his mass predimental previously incorporated Union, using his mass prediment of the component (Or execution of the component of the com

Creativity has always been very important to me. With everyone whom I have found syself liking or admiring, the fact that they were creative was almost always a main factor. I even approach my profession of chemistry as as much as an art as I do as a science—an approach which has been rather successful, I think, and which I plan to continue. (In case any of you are wondering, I develop continue.) (In case any of you are wondering, I develop and consent does not continue and consent does not continue and consent does not continue to the analysis of continue and consent does not continue to the continue of the continue to the continue of the continue to the continue of the contin

At any rate, it all came to a peak with a masty little scene in the huckster's room on the last day of Unicon II. I came in thirty minutes late that day, after getting only six hours sleep the whole weekend, and only thirty the previous seven days, and he came in and began to loudly accuse me of goofing off and doing nothing for the convention, along with a dozen other half-truths and sordid lies which I can't even remember now. I calmly told him to leave my huckster room, and he loudly declared that I was no longer working for Unicon. (Big deal, the work was already done, except that I did miss out on introducing L. Sprague de Camp for his God speech; but this was the member's first direct allusion to the fact that since he had incorporated the convention, I was actually working for him.) I'm sure he later regretted that episide, since he did make a fool of himself in front of numerous dealers and fans, and never alluded to it again afterwards.

This all ties in with <u>Thrust</u>, honest. When we last left the magazine in this story, Dennis Bailey had assumed editorship at the start of 1975. A year and a half later, just a month and a half before Unicon II in July, Dennis announced that he had the issue only one third completed, and wanted se to finish the issue. Since the issue was well over a year late, and I wanted to see it published, I agreed—even though I really needed all my time for Unicon related work. I spent an entire week finishing it up and took it to press, going through alot of bureaucratic bilishit to get the money from the University for the printing. That was last issue, <u>Thrust</u> 47, the Harlan Ellison Issue.

In that burfer and franch week, a flurry of masochism

overtook me, and I knew I wanted to edit <u>Thrust again</u>.
But I also knew that there would be definite problems in trying to work with the club, now that I was at constant odds with the only dominating member in an other-

stant odds with the only dominating member in an otherwise incredibly insipid group. But I made a try anyway. I researched very carefully, and came up with a plan for the lowest possible budget for a magazine of the size and

scope I wanted Thrust to have. I presented the plan take-it-or-leave-it in an in-house memorandum to all the members (my bureaucratic training again being put to use.) The plan called for <u>Thrust</u> to be run as a break-even proposition, with all money funded to the magazine by the university being funneled (somewhat illegally) back to the club--a sum of money that would probably have been about \$600 a year. The only major stipulation was that I have complete editorial control of the magazine. After months of delay, the proposition was finally brought up for discussion and vote.

Needless to say, I was voted down, and having prepared for the eventuality, immediately announced that I was officially dropping their sponsorship and publishing Thrust on my own, and taking my staff with me (I had discussed it with them previously.)

The discussion on the matter before the vote lasted several hours, and was even more ridiculous than I'd have imagined. The main power of the club (he was firmly entrenched by then) came up with all sorts of outlandish objections which I calmly explained to be either impractical, impossible, naive or totally irrevelent. His main objection was that there would be a single editor. He said he wanted the whole club to edit the magazine. I tried to explain why there are no major publications run by committee and never would be, especially by a committee which knows nothing about the subject. Someone has to do the work, someone has to be responsible, someone has to make all the small, fast decisions that must be made daily. I also explained that I would be willing to list the club as publisher, as opposed to sponsor, if and only if they were willing and able (and they were neither) to do the work of a publisher, i.e. distribution, promotion, and advertising solicitation. All this was to no avail. The members of the club were utterly oblivious to the complete asiminity of the objections to having Thrust supply the club with up to \$600 a year.

So I gave up all my copies of Thrust #7 and #6, both of which were funded by the University, and began work on this issue. (I later bought 300 copies of those issues from the club, and I now have them in stock; the club. within a few months, realized they didn't have the

faintest idea what to do with them.)

The long delay (six months) in getting out this issue is mainly attributable to the club. First, it was late September before they finally got around to voting me down. I was then barraged with a continuous stream of rumors that the university was planning to sue, which I'm now rather sure were totally fabricated. I contacted a laywer for advice, and spent many weeks waiting for the promised notification from their laywer, which never occured. I finally, just recently, received a letter from the Office of Student Affairs saying that I was in posession of copies of Thrust #7 as well as original layouts owned by the club, which in both cases was totally and provably false, and I answered with a very clear letter saving so.

So that's the whole sordid story, Hopefully, it ends there.

I would like to pick out at least two individuals of some note who are still members of the University of Maryland Science Fiction Society, who I would like to exempt from this otherwise blanket indictment. First, Steve Goldstein, who was also one of the founding members of the club. Steve has done alot of work for Thrust in the past, including editing the sixth issue, and has a potential for writing that I hope he will continue towards realizing. Second is Joe Lerner, an extremely talanted writer, and a Clarion graduate, who could become a professional of some note if he would only get off his ass and hustle. I first met Joe years ago, when I awarded him first prize in the Thrust Science Fiction Writing Contest for his excellent story "The Lost Runes of Luas," published in Thrust #4. Joe is back with the club in hopes of using the money allocated to the club for Thrust to publish his magazine, with a major focus on poetry. Good luck, Joe. You are going to need it.

### The Issue at Hand:

So, I repeat, this is the first step in the new direction for Thrust. I'm very happy with the way this issue finally turned out. And I had alot of help.

This issue's cover was handled completely by Artie Romero, and is a two-color hand separated creation. (That means that there is no finished original that looks like the cover; the proof is in the printing.) Artie is also handling the actual printing of the magazine in Colorado.

The rest of the artwork this issue was donated by art director Dan Steffan, and that which wasn't done specially for this issue is left over from Dan's now defunct fanzine. Lizard Inn. Dan also did over half of the layout this

And, of course, this is the special TED WHITE ISSUE. We will be featuring Ted's "My Column" each issue, and this is the column, in this issue, which Andy Porter rejected from Algol. This issue's interview with Ted should evoke quite a bit of response from various circles, and we hope to continue our tradition of candidly honest interviews in future issues.

Next issue is still up in the air, but it will be available in late August, in time for Suncon. The regular columns will be back, including another "My Column" by Ted White, another "The Alienated Critic" by myself (I'll be going over the new prozines started in the last year,) the next part of "Essaying" completing this issue's rather overwrought chapter, and Chris Lampton's "The Eclectic Conpany." In addition, Dennis Bailey also plans to start a regular column next issue. The book reviews will return, with our regular staff writers, including Melanie Desmond, who couldn't meet the deadline this issue. There are also several independent articles by other writers in the works.

As you might guess, future issues of Thrust will be larger. Next issue will be at least 48 pages. Future issues will be even larger if I can get the advertising support, or sell over 1000 copies. I hope to do both.

One word about the back issues listed below. They are in extremely limited supply. Since writing the editorial, I have found that I have had to give the University of Maryland Science Fiction Society over half of the back issues to eliminate further hassles. Those issues will be sold out soon, and I don't know when, if ever, I will have the money to reprint them.

Anyway, I hope you all enjoy this issue, and I certainly hope that you have less trouble reading this issue than I had producing it.

### HRUST back issues 3: Interview with Keith Laumer, article on the sf play

- Warp, fiction, book reviews, art by Vaughn Bode, Dave Cockrum, and more,
- #5: Roger Zelazny interviews Frederik Pohl, Balticon Guest of Honor speech by Fred Pohl, fiction by Chris Lampton and Dave Bischoff, article on Michael Moorcock, book reviews, art by Hickman, Rotsler, et cetera.
- #6: Special Worldcon Issue, photos and reports on Discon II, movie review, fiction by Dennis Bailey, etc., book reviews, art by Jack Gaughan, et cetera.
- #7: Special Harlan Ellison Issue, interview with Harlan Ellison, article on Harlan by Dave Bischoff, The Alienated Critic by Doug Fratz, book reviews, art by Rich Bryant, Steve Hauk, et cetera.

All other issues are sold out, sorry, and there are less than 100 of each of the above. All back issues are \$1.00 while they last.

SFIN REVIEW 7



This column began more than ten years ago in Algol, which was then a dittoed fannien more or less in the mainstream of fannish genzines. As Algol evolved into its present quasi-prozine format, by Golumn evolved with it, leaving fannish topics behind and gradually becoming a service column on aspects of the professional sf field. Looking back over those columns, there are a number of which I remain proud-one on literary agents, for example, and another--the most recently published there-on literary collaborations, both witting and unwitting.

The column which follows was subsitted to <u>Algol</u> in the spring of 1976, and was rejected by Andrew Porter with the statement that he felt <u>Algol</u> had outgrown its "need" for my contributions. In the Winter 1977 issue of <u>Algol</u>, Porter explained in his editorial why he had dropped the

column:

"Ted's last submitted column contained information about a field in which I feel he has not had such experience—that of the professional publication and book art director—and such of that information was, I felt, incorrect, sisleading or just plain wrong. Rather than publish naterial which could only provoke a great deal of ill-feeling and anguished response, I chose to reject it."

Porter then went on to libel my earlier contributions

to Algol.

Totter's comments about my experience in the art-direction field are given the lie in the very column he rejected—I've been Art Director of Amazing and Fantastic for seven years, did free-lance work for Scribnars in the natists for the last twenty years. As could be seven the action of the column to the column-which on rereading, I can't see producing "ampuish" from anyone—I'll leave that up to you to decide. I have zade no changes except to slightly update the column—I added the section on Asimov's SF and deleted a comment on the nor-defunite Ofgrager magazine. If you have questions or suggestions (or corrections), please son these to se, c/o this amazine.

For the past several issues, Richard Geis' Science Fiction Review has run a column devoted to criticising the art in the proximes—specifically, the covers—shout which is hall say nothing here except that its author seemed to salecting and presenting proxime cover art. I understand that Freff—those work has been appearing in Gainzy over the past several years—will be taking over that column, and I hope the knowledgebilty will laprove it.

But what I want to discuss here is the side of the sf art business which was conspicuously absent in those earlier columns for SFR. In order to do so, I must take off my "Med White" but and don one marked "J. Süwarus." If that mane meers little to you, it's because you don't read the fine print on the contentspages of Amazing or Fantastic, where J. Süwards is listed as "art director."

It's an open secret - more open than secret, since I've mentioned the fact editorially in one of those magazines-that I an "J. Edwards," and am thus fully qualified to

speak here as an Art Director.

What may be less well-known is the fact that until 1960 or 1961, I considered myself more an artist than editor or writer. Yes, I had Art Training, I have done pastel still-lifes, life-sketches and all the rest. In 1955. I did almost two dozen black and white samples -- in scratchboard and using such devices as zip-a-tone and craftint -- which in a burst of misplaced enthusiasm I sent to Ray Palmer, whose Other Worlds was then on its last legs as a science fiction magazine. (I also sent Palmer several Morris Scott Dollens paintings I'd purchased at the 1955 Worldcon, for possible covers. Palmer kept them all, never used any, and added another level of cynicism to my then more naive outlook of life. But. I digress ... In 1960 I did another bunch of samples, several in collaboration with Andy Reiss. (Reiss was a much more talented artist than I. and went on to become an artist-in-residence and teacher at the Brooklyn Museum.) I took these samples to both John Campbell, at Analog, and Cele Goldsmith at Amazing/Fantastic. Neither gave me any work (although each was good for a new anecdotes; Campbell, for instance, told me that what he liked best about Van Dongen -- an artist he'd used extensively throughout the fifties -- was the fact that Van could "fieldstrip" a jeep in the desert, reassemble it and drive it away), and I filed my samples awayand forgot about an art career. Just as well.

Recently, as part of my post-fire cleaning up (a process which is far from over), I came across those samples again, and liked one well enough that I wrote a story which loosely fit it and put then both in the 50th Anniversary issue of Amazing. It's one of my collaborations with Reiss; he pencilled it and I inked it. If you are interested in my credentials as an artist, I recommend it to you as an example of what I was doling more than fifteen

years ago.

My skills with a brush have grown rusty over the years and I no longer pretend to myself that I am An Artist, but my experiences were instructive, and gave me a sympathetic understanding of what other artists have been and are going through.

The science fiction field, for an artist, breaks down into two broadly defined areas: the sf magazines and the sf books. There are other areas continguous with sf-the black-and-white conic magazines published by Warren and Marvel, for instance, and the groung number of semi-proferances, like the state of the state of the proferances, like the state of the magazine or on the covers of a series of sf paperbacks. let's look at each.

There are only six remaining of magazines. (I've heard runors of more, but we'll wait until one or more appears on the stands.) These come from five publishers. Each has its own procedures and rates of payment. Starting at the top:

Analog is the only of magazine published by a major publisher. Thus, Analog's rates are the best, and the magazine's printing is also the best (although the cover stock used allows the ink from the cover to come off on your fingertips as you read the magazine; a surprising feature of what is otherwise the best-packaged magazine in the field). So Analog is the best place for an artist to appear. Bittor Ben Bow exerts some control over the ard department—he can recommend specific artists for cover assignments, for instance—but the Corde-Mass art director in the control over the service of the control over the con

## MY COLUMN

ted White



was concerned with functionality, and his layouts were at best functional. They were at worst ugly. The difference can be seen—if you have copies of <u>Analog</u> just after the neam-change from <u>actouring</u>, compare them with the issues of a year or two later, when the "analog" logo was placed on a white strip and redesigned.

Although established artists like Schoenhert and Freas have dominated Analog for years, Bows has brought in a variety of older artists—like Jack Gaughan—who refused to work for Campbell, and helped develop newer artists like Difate and Bryant and Hinge as well. Thus, any new artist who want to work for Analog must be doing work which does not compare unfavorably with those artists Analog is presently using. The reward is good pay, there, and possibly, the art director who has been known to hassle artists whose styles are more out of the ordinary, like Mike Hinge. Covers for Analog appear to go through the same process required for paperback covers—which I'll get to further on.

The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction has filtred once or twice with interior art over its sore than twenty-five years of publication, but with the exception of Gahan Hilson's cartoon is not printing any interior art these days. The covers are selected by editor/publisher 24 Fernan, who has specific ideas about what is appropriate for the magazine, and who presents the covers in a clean, since nome is needed.

Over the years. FRSF has had any of its covers printed by a different printed than that which prints the rest of the magazine. This printer has supplied a number of copies of each cover, fully printed, without cover log or type. From time to time, those cover prints have been offered to PSF's readers (I have a number syself, dating from the days of my masociation with the magazine). FRSF's cover printer is unique in my experience in offering these proof-cover prints; show it involves a separate set of plates for wrinting.

Galasy is published by Universal Publishing & Distributing Co. a sinon-rasjor publisher. That means that the company has an art department, etc., but is run in a somewhat hand to-mouth fashion. Payment, for instance, comes on threat of legal action, although regulars with the magazine have learned to threaten politely and play the game so that their paychecks come through about when they expect them. Galaxy pays less for interior art, on a per-page basis, than Analog, but about 50% more (§3)0 versus \$20\$ than Anazing or Fantastic. Saitor James Zeen

seems to be personally involved in the selection and assignment of art, although when Fred Pohl was editor, he was notorious for paying no attention to the art direction or packaging of the magazine. Galaxy occasionally buys full-page art to publish on its own, and has developed a variety of newer artists to replace Jack Geughan, who, until a couple of years ago, illustrated the entire magazine himself (and usually on very short deadlines). The best of the newer artists are Fabien and Freff. I'd say that the magazine is a good one for new artists to break into, judging by its recent accomplishments in that direction. The actual quality of the art in the magazine seems highly variable, although definitely improved over what was appearing there a year or so ago. One gets the impression that Baen is not too knowledgeable about art. and makes occasional mistakes, but knows what he wants and is getting it more consistently these days. Amazing and Fantastic are published by Ultimate Publi-

cations, and, as noted, I am their art director as well as editor. Unfortunately, I am limited by various circumstances to a fairly rigid interior format on the art -- the one-column vertical panel, for the most part. This is because we do not have a production department; our typesetter does the mechanical paste-up of the type and does so in most cases before the art is supplied. The publisher supplies the typesetter with a more or less standard layout for most of the stories, and the typeset page-proofs are then given to the artists in question. The publisher also selects the typestyle and lays out the arrangement of story-title, by-line, etc., for each story's title page. My function as "art director" is limited to the columnheadings, the selection of which artist illustrates which story (sometimes subject to change by the publisher) and the preparation of the cover, for which I do the design and typography. (At one time, I had a relatively free hand in both my choices for cover paintings and my subsequent layout and use of typography, although the publisher has always insisted upon what was listed on the cover. Presently I am supplied with "suggestions" for the cover layout and typography -- usually in the form of a cover I've done several years ago -- and on at least one case, the December 1974 cover, the actual cover was rejected and another was fitted into my mechanical. I have also been requested to avoid using bars, stripes, lines and bullets in my cover designs. And, although I prefer to frame the cover painting and put all the type outside the frame, the publisher prefers full-cover paintings and requires them whenever possible.)

Our rates are, unfortunately, the lowest in this limited field. I try to make this up to the artists by returning their art and giving them what non-monetary rewards I can, such as the individual cover-copyright line on the contents page, a suggestion of Mike Hinge's.

Since I began working on the aagazines, a varlety of artists-many ay personal Iriends-have appeared in their pages. I as very indebted to Jeff Jones and Gray Horrow for their considerable help, especially in those early covern. Presently, Steve Fablen and Bithard Cleen are covern. Presently, Steve Fablen and Bithard Cleen are doing some of their best work for us, and a variety of other talented artists are appearing in our pages regularly. I'm particularly proud of having given Mike Mileg and their their professional exposure in their field, as well as Mike Kallut, Sally, Olsen, and others too maserous to meritan Nature (Financial Control of Miles). The particular is covern when by 170 Fairmanic works of the Nature of Sallada in Covern when by 170 Fairmanic works are the Nature of Sallada in the Nature of Sall

The nevest magazine in the field is Teana Asinov's Science Piction. The magazine pays top rates for its flotion and is gublished by Davis Publications, who also plut out Ellery Queen's Aversey Vanzalie and Airce Titorock's Mystery Vanzalie and Airce Titorock's Mystery Vanzalie, and like its companion magazines, and or thought its packaging was rather ugly. The over its major to the property of the control of

they're given. If this magazine continues its present art policy--as I assume it will--it offers almost no oppurtunities for new artists.

So let's say you are a new artist and you want to break into the of magazines. How do you do it? Well, it helps if you live in or around the New York City area. If you do-man' you almost must if you want to make it in the you do-man' you want if you want to make it in the Amalog and Galaxy, showing them your work and getting dircet feedback from them.

For MESF, you can either send your original painting or a transparancy to Ed Ferman in Connecticut. Transparancies are better-less chance of damage in the malls, easier to handle-but stay away from 55mm slides. Slides can be used, but are difficult to scrutinize without a viewer or projector, and tend towards unexpected graininess and loss of detail when used for a cover. A better that the state of the st

The same goes for cover submissions to ae, which, of course, should go to my Palls Church post office box. My agazines pay only \$50 for a one-time use of a cover painting, which is, I agree, almost criminally low. Galaxy pays \$100 to \$200 for a cover. PESP last I heard, paid \$125 and up for a cover (it may be more by now), and Analog pays best; \$200 and up.

To illustrate for the magazines does not require living in or around NYO, but it helps, especially if deadlines are close and delays in the mail can be significant. In the case of my magazines, you should live around Washington, D.C.—so that I can let you illustrate a story before it's set in type.

So much for the magazines.

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As I said earlier, in dealing with paperbacks, you pretty well must live in or around NYC. Once you're established, you can move elsewhere and maintain an adequate workload, but nothing else can beat personal contacts for getting started. In this case, you're selling yourself. You'll show an art director your samples, and if he's suitably impressed, hw may give you an assignment. In most cases, this means that you'll be given a manuscript to read (sometimes only a synopsis) and be asked to do three or more "cover sketches." These should be color sketches, miniature paintings, in effect, each offering a different approach in terms of design, color and layout. From these, the art director will select one -- or may ask for one combining the various features of several--and tell you to go ahead with the painting. At this point you should have a firm commitment from the company in question. (One major artist of my acquaintance did a cover for a paperback house with an extensive of line. He showed suggestions to the art director, gct a go-ahead on one, painted it, turned it in -- and the editor of the sf line killed it. He wasn't paid. The editor had, in effect, broken the art director's implied promise of acceptance. and the artist never went back to that publisher again.)

Most of magazines don't bother requesting multiple cover designs-Analog is an exception, at least with newer artists-but in the paperback field they are the accepted way of doing business. And one is paid for one's efforts, \$250 to \$500 a cover (and up, in some cases).

Some never artists are approached by agents who wish to represent them. In some cases this may be useful, sepecially if one does live outside New York. Theoretically, the agent acts as one's legan, making the rounds and acquainting art directors with one's work. However, I've heard of 'ew regutable art-agents, and none that I can reconnerd. Beware agents who claim to have an 'in'

with a particular publisher or his art director, and beware any agent who wants once than 10% of your sale price
as his fee. Don't pay a cent to any agent in advance-of
a sale. And bear in nind that any such agent will be
representing other artists as well as yourself, and that
you may be competing with his other clients (ne doesn't
care which of you gets the assignment, since he'll get
the same fee in any case).

Contracts are practically unheard of in the art world, unlike the writing business. Thus, the agent-who functions as business-manager for a writer, scanning the contractual fineprint, negotiating touchy points, and handling subsidiary rights sales-serves a very different function for the artist, and is of much less genuine

In some respects this is unfortunate, since artists—without contracts to pin down their rights—are lide to and ripped off much more than are writers. Mike Hinge and Jeff Jones have researched these legal aspects pain-stakingly, and can give you advice on the subject. But an artists' clearing house is needed and reform is strongly needed in the basic question of artists' rights.

For example, most artists receive a flat fee for a paperback cover, after which the company can do nearly anything with it. It is not uncommon for paperback houses to sell transparancies of cover paintings to foreign publishers (this is especially common in genre fields where covers are all of one type--like westerns and gothics) -- passing not one cent to the artist. Nor do artists receive royalties reflecting the sales of the books their covers adorn -- even though a cover may be a major factor in a book's sales. And some artists have even discovered descrepancies between the painting they did and the published version. (Jeff Jones did the cover for the first edition of my Spawn of the Death Machine, then a Paperback Library book. He showed me the painting before I'd finished the book and I made sure that they agreed in detail. When the book came out, the painting had been clumsily altered -- a knife had been turned into a sword, although there were no swords used in the book, and the female in the background had been twisted from the waist down, and chains added. All of this had been done without Jeff's knowledge or permission.)

But the situation is improving for artisis. More publishers are now buying only one-time use and returning the physical paintings (which represent a considerable value to the artist, who can sell them at a commention or privately for as much or more than the publisher paid him, thus doubling his income on the painting)—something that fessional artists join together and inform themselves of fessional artists join together and inform themselves of their rights and insist upon then in their dealings with publishers, reform will continue and perhaps written contracts will someday become accepted practice.



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## THE TED WHITE INTER-VIEW!

## by doug fratz, dave bischoff & dan steffan

Thrust: You have been involved in science fiction for more than twenty-seven years, either as a professional or in fandom. Do you consider yourself a professional fan or a fannish professional?

White: I try not to think of myself in any of those terms. I regard Bob Toucker as my inspiration in this regard. It's my impression that Bob thinks of himself as a fam who just happens to write science fintion, not a fam who "outgree" fandon and went on to bigger and better things, which is, unfortunately, that it. I don't think I ever left fandon; I just went into prodom in parallel.

Thrust: Do you think you've been as successful as a pro

White: What is your definition of success?

Thrust: Say, satisfaction in what you do.

White: I think I've gotten more satisfaction on a lot of levels from being a fan, but I've also gotten satisfactions from being a pro. Being a pro, by definition, means you're doing it for money, whereas being a fan means doing it for the pleasure of doing it. Now there are many things I did as a pro that didn't it. Now there are many things I did as a pro that didn't it. got paid as a pro. Not particularly well, but ay lifestyle has been supported now for 'lifteen yearn. So on that level, I have been successful. But it's comparing apples and oranges.

Thrust: You've said before that people haven't really taken much notice of your fiction. Does this bother you?

Whi'e: Sure it does. I think it bothers every author who isn't getting the notice he thinks he should be getting. When I was first publishing stories in the early sixties. I expected instant change in my status





"Barry Malzberg is one of the very few authors who have gone on record as saying I'm an underrated author to whom more attention should be paid."

that never occured. I also sort of expected a level of critical attention that I never got, although I got more of it then than I've gotten recently. I thought, well, at first you have to establish yourself, and things will get better. Instead, they've gotten worse. I think that my writing has improved considerably in the last ten to fifteen years. I think the stories I'm writing now are ones that nobody else is writing, that please me when I reread them, and I know that I'm not mistaken in this, because occasionally I do get some feedback. Barry Malzberg is one of the very few authors who have gone on record as saving I'm an underrated author to whom more attention should be paid. It wouldn't be necesary for him to say this if I was getting any critical attention at all. I'm not.

Thrust: Richard Geis has given your work some attention.

White. Yes, well, but Geis doesn't give ae very much. I pick up every SFR to see if he's reviewed Amaching or Fantastic or anything that I've had a hand in, but there's susually nothing. I think the major reason that I haven't gotten the critical attention of many writers who don't write as well as I do is my reputation for being and remaining a fan. I think that this has brought me a great deal of patronization and condescension from the various cliques that make up the science fiction establishment, particularly the old guard Milford establishment, which actually once barred as from a Milford conference.

Thrust: When was that?

White: That was in the early sixties, at a time when Terry Carr was going, we were close friends, and the ostensible reason that I was barred was that I had only published in collaboration. Ny first two storles were bought the same day, one with Terry Carr and one with Marion Zinner Bradley.

Thrust: What were they?

White: "Phoenix" was with Bradley and appeared in Amazing in 1963, becoming later the first chapter of <u>Phoenix Prime</u>. The one with Terry was called "I, Executioner and appeared in <u>Morids of If</u> in 1963 and became the first chapter of <u>Amiroid Avenger</u>, my first novel.

Thrust: How were these collaborations done?

White: In fact, both of these were my stories. I had been gone over and polished. It was the awareness that these people hadn't really added such to my stories that lese people hadn't really added such to my stories that led me to start wring on my own. I dinn't really have any terrific confidence in myself as a writer at that time. But anyway, I was barred told set that this was part of a separate power play to keep virginia Kidd out of the conference. I think this may have been in the wake of her break up with James Blish, and they barred her because she had only writen collaborations, so, to be comsistent, they had to bar me. This sopped my ego somewhat, but I've noticed that I mere was asked to a Milford com-

ference, even after I started publishing on my own, during which time Terry Carr continued to be invited. The general reception I've got from these people was a kind of tolerant namesent, a kind of he's-of-mo-importance-but-he's miserful with a story for Orbit, and got back a letter, one terre paragraph informing ne that this story was not suitable for Orbit. He used the phrase "not the kind of thing we publish in Orbit." The story was "Sixteen and Vanilla" and it appeared in Vertex, and recently a Prench publisher paid ne \$75 to reprint it, a very short story. (Whom I worked at Shoot Nerdith, the Pench were for the paragraph of the prench were formed to be the prench were for the prench were formed to be the prench were formed to

Thrust: But over the last few years, it seems you've published most of your stories in <a href="mailto:Amazing">Amazing</a> and Fantastic. Do you think that you're getting less critical acclain because of that?

White: It's entirely possible. Actually, I published most of the things I did in Amazing and Fantastic for one reason; I liked the stuff well enough to want to see it published the way I wrote it. In so doing, I took less pay than I would have gotten elsewhere. And although I'm not a critical success, I am a conmercial success, moderately speaking. I should imagine that I could sell stories to any of the major paying markets, and I have to several, It's a weird example, but I had two stories appear in early Elwood anthologies, one in "And Now Walk Gently Through the Fire" by R. A. Lafferty and Other Stories from Chilton (mine was one of the other stories). I received a letter from an editor at Chilton saving mine was the best story in the book, and would I please do a book for them. When I replied, nothing. The next year I heard that that editor had left the company. So occasionally people do ask me for stories, and occasionally I write them, and they are usually well received. And almost invariably I get more money for them. But also, about half of the stories I've published in Amazing and Fantastic were written for Harlan Ellison for Dangerous Visions or its sequels. I did at least five for him, which I think are among the best I've done. Some I've tried on other people, like Damon Knight, some I sold elsewhere as "Sixteen and Vanilla," but with several I felt that there was no use, as they were fairly explicit sexually, and science fiction magazines weren't publishing stories which are sexually explicit. So I published them my-self, partially as a vanity, but I considered them better than what I was getting in the mails. Most of my other stories I've published were written especially for the magazines. Stuff around covers, like "Junk Patrol" around a Dan Adkins cover and "Under the Mad Sun" around an illustration by Mike Nally, I've started several series which I haven't had the time to be able to pick up on. One is "Ard Another World Above" in Fantastic, which introduces a pre-Apache boy who moves out of pre-Columbus America into

a fantasy world where the world is flat, and in the

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"When Harlan Ellison has a story he wants to call attention to, he sends a xerox of it to each member of the SFWA"

sky is another world you can look up on. I want to do a whole series, but haven"t had time to do more than the first story. So in the sense that I've set ayself up to appear in the magazines more than I have, I don't think I'm taking advantage of it.

Thrust: Do you find your editorial duties taking up so much of your time that you don't have time to write?

White: That's at least 50% true. After all the work in editing a magazine, you don't really feel like writing.

Thrust: Campbell stopped writing altogether when he began editing <u>Astounding</u> and Fred Pohl wrote virtually nothing while editing <u>Galaxy</u> and <u>If</u>.

White: And now Pohl has become quite prolific.

Thrust: To get back to your writing, I read "welcome to the Manhiem from the 50th Anniversary Assains and thought it was an insensely powerful story. In fact at least as powerful as Ellison's "Shattering" and no sore controversial in story content than Reamy's "San Diego Lightfoot Sue", both of which were nominated for Nebulas last year. Yet, I'm sure that your story work even be considered this year.

White: I think you're right.

Thrust: I think that may be partially attributed to the fact that you published it in your own magazine.

White: I think in general, members of the SFWA don't read Amazing and Fantastic, and it's not that I published the story myself, but that Amazing and Fantastic are somehow beneath their attention. It's not a recent phenomenon. When I was still with F&SF, and a charter member of the SFWA, I went to the second Nebula Awards Banquet and asked Tom Purdom if he had seen a particular story in F&SF. He said he didn't have time to read the magazines any more. The conversation rippled up and down the long table of sf writers and spouses, and confirmed that almost all the people there weren't reading of magazines much any more, even though they still contributed to them. They picked up ones with their stories, some even had subscriptions, but they didn't read them. At that time it took only three or four people to win a Nebula, because of the diverse voting. I've heard alot of voting details on both Hugos and Nebulas: of course, I ran a Worldcon. I'm very cynical about these awards. I've seen how someone could buy twenty people dinner and win by eight votes. These awards do not come down from Mount Olympus on the basis of actual quality. It depends on where it appeared and how widely it was circulated. When Harlan Ellison has a story he wants to call attention to, he sends a xerox of it to each member of the SFWA. I don't know whether this is unethical or not, but the fact is that that story is going to get nominations because that story will get read.

Thrust: But you're not even a member of the SFWA.

White: No, I dropped out in 1972 or 1973. It took them a year to notice.

Thrust: Why did you quit?

White: I saw the way they were treating asseding and Pantastic and I could see no personal benefit from being a member. It was not the group it started out to be, it was primarily a group to give its emebers swaris, in the name of promoting sf. As far as I can see, it's actually in the promotion of specific people, who have made hardsome amounts of money from receiving Webula Awards. Two thirds of the membership we only sold one or two stories, and are just there to support this, in a passive way.

Thrust: Then the Nebula Awards are only given to certain "in" members?

White: Look, if I agreed to a statement like that, some people who have Nebulas, some very close friends like Alexei Panshin, would say "Ted! What do you mean by this?! Scream! Rant! Rave! " No. not always. Often. There are upsets. Rite of Passage was one. But look at the early Nebulas, they went almost exclusively to the Milford Mafia group. Then you see a shift, and the Southern, New Orleans group was very powerful. I know for a fact that the other members of this group were promoting one member's story to the extent of offering officerships in the SFWA for votes for this story. At different times, different cliques have pushed their favorite story, and different cliques have had more power. Some people have called the awards a sham. Harry Harrison came out with a very strong blast; he wanted the voting changed to a panel of judges. He wondered why none of the Nebula winners were in he and Aldis' Best of the Year volume.

Thrust: So you decided to quit instead of fight the system?

White: Fight to whose advantage? Not mine. They have nothing to give me. The SFWA is the N3F of prodom. It is there to welcome in new writers and give them some help, real and imaginary, and it gives Nebulas.

Thrust: Which do mean money ...

White: To people, not to the SFWA, although the awards volume does go to the SFWA. Winners of Nebulas get bisser advances.

Thrust: Wouldn't that be a reason to stay in the SFWA?

White: Only if you think you'll win a Nebula, which I never considered seriously that I would. I wouldn't stay in an organization to win an award anyway, that's a betty reason.

Thrust: But the other reason for the SFWA is as a social organization.

White: I can seet and socialize with the people I want to at conventions. There's always been a very strong question as to whether it should be a social organization or a union. I was never interested in a union. I strongly resist being unionized by anyone. There are people who can give really good arguenets in favor of a union with all the powers of the Screenwriters Guild, with really dictatorial powers to publishers. The problem with that is what you dictate. One OFWA President told me that he wanted to try to force the word rates for every'sf magazine to 56/word. I told his that would kill two thirds of them. Only manage pays 56/word. The others pay a top of 34. As a writer, I say absolutely. Word rates haven't gone up that much in the last forty years. They were is in long atternal and also of necessars. The cover price has quadrupled. With amalog, the cover price has guadrupled. With amalog, the cover price has guadrupled. With amalog, the cover price has printing an ageains. I can see where a union would want to up the word rates, but no sf magazine is the wanter and the word rates. When a continue the price of the word rates, when you want to up the word rates, but no sf magazine is the water and under the break-even point.

Thrust: Any chance your publisher, Sol Cohen, will be able to raise the word rates on Amazing and Fantastic?

White: Not soon, He's now spending much more than he was when I started with the magazines, because they were over one half reprint, for which he owed \$20-225 a story, and was actually paying nothing. Sol does pay more than le often, he has his own system on this, not determined by reading the stories. He'll know and the other magazines. He'll pay someone more if you tall his assessment he'll pay someone more if you tall his assessment analog written.

Thrust: To get hypothetical for a moment, if someone was willing to put alot of money, say a half a million dollars, into <u>Amazing</u>, do you think it could be made into a widely read, highly acclaimed magazine?

White: Probably not. I don't think it could be made into a commercial success on that level. How many people actually read sf or would be willing to read. it? I think not that anny. Not that many people in this culture read fiction. Not that many people see reading as enjoyable. Nocessary, yes, enjoyable, no. That's why nonfiction outsells fiction on the newsstands. To be an of reader, you have to have an aready of the seed of the seed of the seed of the seed of your own, an active lengination and a willingness to experience, vicariously, new things. This winnowing process probably leaves less than one half stilling people.

Thrust: Stephen King has been made into a best-seller.

White: The Exorcist-type stories are not imaginative stories. They simply pander to people's superstitions and fears, in a very literal and unlanginative way. The popular of its fake of, like The Androida Strain, Palleafe, etc. These are the popular force of of, except for Star Trek.

Thrust: Why is Star Trek popular?

white: Star Trek put on TV, better than ever before, the feeling of the conic book. Battan on TV was can, neaning that they were not confortable with having live actors act like people do in conics. Star Trek got around that by taking all the things popular in conic book of and transforming them. The inconsis"Star Trek put on TV, better than ever before, the feeling of the comic book... the inconsistancies, everything done for flash and show, the heavy reliance on monsters."

tancies, everything done for flash and show, the heavy reliance on monsters.

Thrust: But some of the Star Trek monsters werm't evil.
White: Very fow. One show they find a colony that has
allen spore that turns everyone into superfine
people. And this was the allen menner to be defeated.
Kirk had to discover the fine old American virtue of
anger to win and free this crew from this utopia.

Thrust: That was more a display of Kirk's macho middle American 20th Century work ethic than a blanket fear of aliens.

White: I think it's not sf in any case, and that's why it was so popular.

Thrust: You were on a local TV show yourself the other day.

White: Yes, a local station decided to do a show on sf.
They had Ron Miller, a really good of artist, se as
an sf editor, Alfred Bester as an author, a file person from the American File Institute as an expert on
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File Institute Transport on of those BermudaTriangle, the-aliens—have-come books. They mixed in
one show Star Trek, UPGs and sf. They had supposedly
been on sf. read my 50th Anniversary American
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Thrust: When did you first get into fandom?

white: I usually regard it as 1951. I was buying every science fiction magazine, and especially liked the letters columns and features. I knew iamediately that fandom was for me. I had letters published and started corresponding with a fan and got his fansine. I disn't get into local fandom until 1954, with the Washington Science Fiction Association.

Thrust: You were president of WSFA for a time.

White: I became president within six months of joining the group. At that ithe, it had unred into a pin nochle club, with most of its founding members absent. I was the first new blood, and even brought alot of old blood back. I found out about WSFA from Bob Tucker. By the end of ay presidency, the club was twice as large, and much more active. The pincohle group never forgave me, and that was the last elective office I ever held in WSFA, although I remained a member until 1959.

Thrust: And your fanzine career?

White: I was pricarily an artist, but I did write lots of incredibly bad fiction, plot synopses that were really standard, like the supernova that turns out to be the wisemen's star. Other writers now of note were doing this too, however, like [erry Carr...

Thrust: And Ellison...

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"When I joined WSFA in 1954, the one name which communicated to everyone in this rather moribund club was Harlan Ellison."

white: No. Harlan did have a famile, though, Science Fantasy Bulletin, and he asked as to contribute art. I did some, quite bad. But the stories were bad too, although Harlon Ziamer Bradley even at that time told ne that iff lever wanted to collaborate, let ther know. I kept that in mind for ten years. Throughout the fiffties, I was not much of a writer. I did one column on how I didn't know what to write about. I had very little to say. I was actually better as an artist and famile editor. I was very young and my talent hadn't developed at all. But in the fifties, I did seet larry guard. A bard a seet larry young sometimes he said things that didn't sink in for six years.

Thrust: How did you get into pro writing?

White: I went to New York City, but to become an editor or artist, and not in sf, but in the pass field. Heteromee and write in that field. That was in 1959. I didn't get into writing sf seriously until 1962. I starred by analysing some A.B. van Vogt stories in 1961 and realizing that I could write new stories with all the essential elements of this writing. So I starred writing a novel, just like van Vogt, a new idea every 800 words, but I got bogged down by chapter four. I later picked it tack up and had Terry Carr go over it and it became "I, Exceutioner." The novel I had started was Anirold Averger. I hadn't thought before that I could write fiction.

Thrust: To get back to your fan writing, you've gotten involved in alot of controversies.

White: I hold very strong opinions, and I differ from alot of people in that I'm more likely to speak my mind. The last example in fandom was in 1964, an unpleasant scandle around a successful attempt to exclude a prominent fan from a Worldcon. That divided fandom right down the middle, in terms of power. The Worldcon committee was on one side. I was on the other side. There was alot of unpleasantness, alot of friendships were breached and never healed. There was another group of fans who just straddled the fence on the issue. I thought it was a terrificly important moral issue, and didn't see how anyone could do that. I've always had a controversial reputation, but I think less so recently. Yet, in the same issue of Algol in which he explains why he rejected my column. Andy Porter generally libels my past columns. I think you have the issue there. He says "I have been receiving an increased amount of amazed comments from legal people over some of Ted's columns, and libelous statements he's made in them." (Not good English.) I don't think I've made any libelous state-ments. I've been very careful not to. When I was telling a story to make a point, I left out the names if I thought it may be considered libelous. It's also true that I know alot of dirt on alot of people, just as alot of people know alot of dirt on me, and I feel it foolish to sweep dirt under the carpet and pretend it doesn't exist.

Thrust: How is it that someone like Harlan Ellison can take a rather belligerent attitude and come out as a valiant crusauder?

White: Harlan has that reputation to some people, and to some it's worse than mine. Harlan's personality and mine, however, are very different. Harlan has always been a very dynamic person, and I think that he sometimes makes a fool of himself. Harlan has had a very had reputation with various parts of fandom from time to time, usually following one of his farewells to fandom. I think that Harlan enjoys a love/hate relationship to fandom, as in a minor way I do myself. Harlan sees fandom as his original peers, but most of them rejected him at the time. Harlan was made sport of throughout the fifties by people who, although not his closest friends, lived in his area and knew him well, many of whom spoke of him with great contempt. When I joined WSFA in 1954, the one name which communicated to everyone in this rather moribund club was Harlan Ellison. In 1954, before he had ever been published. Say Harlan Ellison, and everyone would laugh and say something nasty about him. These people had never met him and practically knew nothing about him, but he had already established himself on . that level. It goes back a long way. On the one hand these people were the ones he wanted to impress the most, and on the other hand these are the people who have treated him the worst, least feelingly and least knowledgably.

Thrust: You used to live with Harlan, didn't you?

White: No, Harlan used to live with me. It was my apartment. Harlan grew up in Ohio. By 1955 he came to New York to become a writer. He went back to Cleveland for the Wcrldcon that year, and that's where I met him. He lived in New York for several more years and then he was drafted, and was in the army for a few years. Harlan can tell you some rousing stories of those days, where he probably cut a wider swathe than anyone else. Then he went to Chicago and had a hand in changing a cheap 35¢ girly pulp into a higher priced men's magazine called Rogue, which was the only Playboy imitator that made any attempt to rival Playboy's artistic quality at that time. My first sale was to Harlan, a title to a Silverberg article. He paid me 5¢ a word; I think he sent me a quarter. Then he came back to New York and lived with me a few months before getting an apartment three doors up the street. Harlan then remarried and went back to Chicago, started Regency Books, came briefly back to New York, and then moved to Hollywood where he's been ever since. So during the period I knew Harlan in New York, weither of us were much of a financial success. I used to love to go to editorial offices with Harlan. He was always a good show. We rarely had 15g for the subway. We would go uptown by going to 6th Avenue, wait for a truck to go by, hop on the back and ride uptown and jump off to see Don Wollheim at Ace, or somebody else. We'd get to an editorial office about two or three in the afternoon, and Harlan would take the office over, become an entertainer. All the secrataries would come in, and all work in

"In prodom, you don't really have friends. It's like an office where you're all striving for the same position."

the office would stop for the rest of the day. And Harlan gave a good show. I feel that as Harlan has become more of a public showman, he has lost some of the sharpness and touch that he had when he was doing this some spur of the asoment punning and the like. But you've seen Harlan, you know how sharp he still

Thrust: Another contemporary of yours is Terry Carr ...

of the breakup of his first marriage. I was running Towner Hall, a mimeo shop that was quite a fannish hangout. Avram Davidson was a regular there, and soon became editor of F&SF, and began buying stories from Terry. So many, in fact, that for a short time some were published under the name Carl Branden, so Terry's name wouldn't be in every issue. But Terry's first sale was to me. I was commissioned by Harlan Ellison to do a Regency Book, an anthology on jazz, Harlan called me at 5:00 A.M. from Chicago to tell me he was dedicating Memos From Purgatory to me, he read the dedication, and wanted me to go to the Worldcon in Seattle. I told him I didn't have enough money, and he said why don't you do a jazz anthology for me. You can see how this all fits together here. Terry wrote "Blind Clarinet" for that anthology. It was fiction. But by the time I turned the book in. Harlan had left Regency, and although we got to keep the advance, the book was never published. Terry and I probably hit our peak years of fannish activity then, before being slowed down by the 1964 unpleasantness. When we were both working for Scott Meredith, we collaborated on three stories, all of which sold. We also sold a collaborative novel called Invasion From 2500 for a line of action adventure of novels aimed at readers who don't usually read sf. Does that sound familiar? We used the name Norman Edwards and dedicated it to ourselves, "without whom this book would not have been possible." I did the first draft, and Terry did the second. I was astonished to see terry hadn't made any changes that couldn't be made with a pen on a manuscript. He only wrote one new scene. Otherwise, the book was 90% mine, so I decided that if I could do that much, I should be able to write on my own. Terry then went to Ace and developed the Specials line. I did freelance proofreading. I, folks, an the person who copyedited The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. LeGuin. Terry noved to the west coast and I haven't seen him lately, but I still feel warmly towards him.

Thrust: What percentage of your time do you spend on Amazing and Fantastic as opposed to writing?

White: I spend most of my time on the magazines. Sometimes I go for a whole week without touching a typewriter. Maybe it's unfortunate, but maybe I've burned myself out to some extent on sf. I've been a reader since eight, a fan since thirteen, I's now thirty nine and maybe it's time to move on to something else, I don't know. I do music writing as well, now. I don't really get paid, except in free recoids, but I get to write what I want. I've noticed that the more people pay, the more control they want over what you write. If I'm going to write abut something I like, I'd rather receive nothing and say what I want than get Icp/worf for the kind of slamh published in the mastic reviews in Playboy-

Thrust: What else would you like to get into other than writing.

White: Music, as a performer.

Thrust: On the saxophone?

White: No, on the keyboards. I see the keyboards as the dominant instruments of the seventies. What I'd like to do is have sold a best seller.

Thrust: Why do you think Andy objected to your column that we are publishing?

White: I as tually think that it had nothing to do with the column itself, it had to do with the position he saw himself in in relation to me in the professional world. This is the best example I can see as to the difference between fandom and prodom. In prodom, everybody, even your closest friend, is your competitor. In fandom, this is simply not true. In prodom you don't really have friends. It's like an office where you're all striving for the same position. That is always there in the background. I feel that as Andy has left the fannish world behind and decided to make it in the sf world as a professional, he saw himself to be in competition with me. There's a certain amount of irony here, because I am responsible for Andy's professional career. I encouraged Andy as a fan in his fannish career, but I also got him his job at F&SF, as slush pile reader, assistant editor. From this he built his professional contacts, although it is also true that he had had a job briefly at Lancer before that. For many years, he regarded me as a very close friend. We went to the 1968 Worldcon together. It's purely heresay, but I have the impression that he thought himself in line for a position on Amazing and Fantastic under a new publisher. It never happened, but he thought it was going to happen. He began severing all connections to me when he decided that this was likely to occur. I think I can say that without any prejudice to Andy, but simply as a case as this is the way striving in this ingrown field can effect friendships. I aust say that I'm rather hurt by the way he publicly threw me out of Algol. I don't think I ever did anything to justify that.

SFIN REVIEW 17



### SF IN THE COMICS!

a column of latent cynicism by

Stence fiction in coato book form, as a rule, has almost laws, fallen within the 99% category of Sturgeon's Law, then cospared to science fiction as a whole. But then, so have science fiction movies. The fiftless aw some rather good science fiction coates from EC, especially the Brakry adaptions, but not of their scores were still stuck in the about ending man versus monster class. If stuck in the about ending man versus monster class. If stuck in the about ending man versus monster class. If stuck in the last tenty-five years, we would find would find alot of good work, but it hasn't. The few exceptions to this in the sixtles include such efforts as Stanley Fitt's "Gully Royle," an adaption of Bester's The Stars, My Destination.

In this column, I'm going to look at a few of the more recent attempts at adapting science fiction to comics form. Since sf in coalcs has never sold well—even the ED sf line exited only because it was substitized by the more lucrative horror coalcs line—there are relatively few purely sf coalcs. Most of these are in the form of black and white magazines, as opposed to standard four color conics, since the magazines can survive with smaller sale.

Most of the recent of conics are still making the same mistakes. They tend to have poor and shallow characterizations, stupid plots, typical "comic book" dialog and a bad habit of substituting monsters for more interesting and legitimate plot devices.

Some of the recent work of Richard Corben have been notable exceptions. Corben's of strips appeared first in underground comics, then Warren black and white magazines—athough some were in color—and finally, just recently, in Heavy Metal, a slick conics magazine from the National Langoon people. His work in a fas been almost uniformly good some grippingly serious, some full of Corben's own unique form of wit. One of the better little stories from the undergrounds is "The Awakening" in Slow Death#4. It is the story of a crycepenically preserved terminal cancer victi waking up in the future, and looking outside at the landscape, thinks he's on the noon. In the well-done surprise

ending, of course, he finds he's really on Earth. The cover to that conic, by the way, is a really beautiful drawing by Corben of two aliens digging up a engraved rock slab saying "A World Peace Treaty was signed on this spot by all the nations of Earth."

A superb example of Corben's sardonic wit can be seen in his "Unprovided Attack on a Hilton Hotel." The Hilton that was attacked is in orbit around Saturn, the attack coning from the Waldorf-Astoria Corporation over framchise rights. It ends up being a World War II spoof, with the president and vice-president being Franklin Roosewell and Harry Truman, and Elnstein, in the form of a crasy artistrand part-time physics genium-raneal Professor Schwartzer-and part-time by the second particular to the Hilton staff where to lock for the nost spectaular display of colors.

Most recently, Corben has a series in the new <u>Heavy</u> <u>Metal</u>. The first eight pages are in #i; the strip is called "Den," and looks very promising. Corben's color work is almost beyond compare.

In the last three years, Marvel Comics has tried of in their black and white line, most notably in seven issues of Unknown Worlds of Science Fiction. The work varied greatly, and sany were adaptions of classic of stories.

Don Glut did a suther good job in stapting Stanley Weinbaum's "Martian Otypes," which appeared in 1934 as one of the first stories to present a well-characterised alien. The alien was a Hartian bird creature that, among other things, slept with its beak in the ground to look white scripts with the script was placed to the control of the beat the script was placed to relating the delibum's stript was placed to relating the delibum's stript.

Gerry Commay is much less successful in adapting Freter'c Brown's "Arena," which was also used loosely in adaption for a Star Trek episode. In addition, the artwork by Buscena and Glordano is completely uninspired. The most unfortunate charge is made with the desiction of the allen. They changed it into a typical coalc book EEM, with tenaclee and reptilian head. In the original, to quote Brown's story, "It seemed to have no legs or arms that could be seen, no features. It rolled across the blue sand with the fluid quickness of a drop of sercury." That, 'friends, is a much sore original and interesting concept for an allen. and book dialog, causes it to completely lack the tension and despair of the protagonist in the short story.

In another issue, Doug Moench had the chitzpah to adapt Michael Moorcook's rather daring <u>Behold the Man</u>. Not only is the story-line very controversial by conic book standards, but it is also an incredibly powerful book, just the kind which is hardest to adapt to comics form. With the help of Alex Mino's strange art style, however, Moench manages to aske the strip almost as powerful as the novel.

Noward Chaykin adapted "All the Myriad Ways" by Larry Niven alasot exactly from the story, and in this case the strip falled moetly because the story is, in my opinion, very minor Miven. Doug Meenen picked a much better Miven story to adapt, "Not long Before the End." It's only weakness in conics form is that I don't think artist Vicente Alexar read the original story, as the artuck is with the strip as the artuck is the strip as typically sinister. Some of the facial expressions are totally out of character.

Roy Thomas put all his talent and the blearre art style of Alex Mino to work in trying to adapt Harian Ellison's equally blearre short story "Repent, Harlequin! Said the Ticktockman." They probably did the best job that could be done, but Ellison's huncr metamorphasized into comics book form just inn't the same. The Harlequin did not look symmetry that the same that the same that the same with the protagonist in this story, as Harlan does, the whole effect is lost.

Of all of Aifred Bester's brilliant output, Denny O'Nell chose one of his most minor stories to adapt, "Man and No Eve." The art doesn't fit the story; Frank Robbins can be a very good illustrator, but is held in relatively low esteen because he seldom gets to do a story that fits his style. The story manages to have the whole Earth die without invoking any enotional response in the reader in the reader.

John Wymdham's typical British disaster novel, The Day of the Triffids is adapted in two parts, and it is such an adaptable book that even Gerry Conway's dumb comic book dialog doesn't keep it from being noderately effective.

All in all, Marvel and editor Roy Thomas did rather well with their adaptions. Most of the original stories were not so good--mostly standard comic book sf.

One of the worst bonks to hit the comics scene recently usa Roger Elwood's serctifully short-lived Starstream. Elwood unerringly managed to seek out and gather together the worst writers and artists ever to have worked in the consisted field, most of them seemingly chosen from Gold Key's present hack staff. Writers like Arnold Drake and George Kashian have made their names almost synonomous with bad conte book writing.

There were four issues, with adaptions of stories by aging authors in each, much, I's sure, to their enhancement. Almost each is a perfect example of how moit to do sf in a could book format. The writers and artist tried to take well-written and matures is tories and artist tried to take well-written and matures is tories and artists tried to take well-written and matures is tories and symposists where lack of talent, they "succeeded," olds. Through sheer lack of talent, they "succeeded," olds.

It's hard to imagine what a bad story John Campbell's classic "Nho Goss There?" can be after Armoid Drake and Jack Abel turn it into a simple little we-found-a-monster-let's-kill't vignetic that looses completely the drawn out tension of Campbell's story. It's hard to imagine how landkunter and idiotic larry Nivers "The Flight of the Gross" can be if striped of its original irony and subtle more can be if striped of its original irony and subtle dark and institute that the complete discovery of the complete

It goes on and on. They assasinate Asimov and Anderson, wound Williamson, murder McCaffrey and violate van Vogt.

On to cheerler topics. I'll forgive Byron Freiss for labeling his and Steve Fablen's <u>Starfann</u> book as "Full Color Adventure in the Star Trek Tradition," and say that I think it was a very interesting effort. It's the only of book so far in Byron's <u>Fiction Illustrated</u> earlies from anythink interesting.

The story is of Sarth's first interstellar probe, which gets drawn through a black hole into another galaxy to a planet of very likable aliens. Fablen adapted to four color coads a perfectly, and his "special effects" are fantastically beautiful. The book reads like the first few chapters of a better than average space opera. It ends with the crew deciding to try to re-enter the black hole to return to our Galaxy, and find appear. The forthcoming, and nay or may not degenerate into drivel if they do appear.

Like Richard Corben, George Metzger started in comics fandom and first found larger audiences in the underground comics, where he did some very interesting of work. His "Beyond Time and Again" series, once scattered

throughout various underground publications, has just been collected in a very prestigious hardback book by Kyle and Wheary. It makes a very interesting showcase of Metzger's unique style, and is billed as the first graphic novel. Unfortunately, it's not. The series is only forty one

pages, and although the plot is complex, the story ends without resolution. Almost as soon as the main character finds he has the strange power to travel to anywhere in time or space, the story ends in addstride. As much as I admire George Metzger's work, I can't

As much as I admire George Metzger's work, I can't really recommend the average of reader to spend \$10 on this book. But do ask your library to get it. (Kyle & Wheary, 724 14th St., Huntington Beach, CA 92648.)

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That delightful dance of facric feet across the base of one's spine, that utter and complete absorption in a new world or a delightful idea, that heady, word-drunk rush of image upon implication that separates the soul from the self and dessiminates it into the glittery, star-dusty universe; the sense of wonder.

They say that the Golden Age of science fiction was not Campbell's, but Fourteen's. This was nost certainly true of myself, Adolescence was the prime of my enthusiasm for science fiction, my numry passion that burned my dreams even more than the curious desires flickering up in my libido. I cramede clones fiction and fantamy down my mind-mass by the handful, and cried for more, as I canned about the universe with Heinlein\_ Jaumer, more caused about the universe with Heinlein\_ Jaumer, more could magic up a world in a breath of words, send my senses funcillum into forever.

And now it's gone, gone, gone.

Dead. Only an occasional welcome ghost haunts me in the pages of science fiction, my eyes having hardened with adulthood,

But yet I doggedly read the literature, and would like to think I can write ti--or my brand of it, at any rate. I sometimes ponder the reason for this. As I cling to ghost of resembered teen-age pleasures? Will I not let go, and in holding on, as I delaying the natural course off of the property of th

I ramble on. And yet, I suppose this could be the central core of these essays I have taken on at the encouragement of the editor of this journal. Why am I so obsessed yet with scleene fiction when the demon has been, not exortised, but driven from my brain by ennul.

This column I mean to use as both a podium and a peychatrist's couch, so you must excuse if ny tone peychatrist's couch, so you must excuse if ny tone howers between George Bernard Shaw and Portinoy. I hope to experiment with several styles of essay-form in the progress, for the betterment of ny writing, and organizational faculties, which are at best poor—ay sentence and paragraphs rely more on intuition and remembered reading than conscious use of taught patterns.

reading than conscious use of taught patterns. Too, the essay form is perhaps the most egoistic in literature, and although I do not disavow a strong ego, I dislike talking about its opinions and experiences.

In essays the ego celebrates itself, in art and artifice (the latter of which, I fear hen ay usual fictional province for the most part) that governing lord of the writer conceals thacelf in the robes of plot, oberacter, and the usual devices of fiction. In essays one lays bar one's meaner nature, one's prejudices, dislikes, joys, sorrows merely in the slant taken toward the subject. Fiction at least allows less tame-breasting the subject.

So let's have it all out in the beginning. My name is David Fredrick Bischoff, I'm me and no one else, and I kind of like that state. I tend toward self-deprecation

in my personal writing, but heed it not; it's ascrely a knee-jenk reaction to discussing syself, a waquely hopeful ploy to obtain the reaction "That's not true; you're a pretty decent chap." Also since put-downs are the current stuff of American humour (witness the mirror, American TV sit-coms), and since I am my own easiest (and safest) target, to obtain chuckles I may from time to time induce in a joke at my own expense.

But to specifics...

The Death of Wonder.

In order to understand properly the expiration of a nebulous thing like Wonder, one must comprehend its birth And Wonder, I suppose, came to me at an early age much as I imagine it comes to any child as it realizes its separateness from its environent. But I was the sort who clumg to this, rather than let it pass, trod under by the relentless feat of the day-after-day familiarity with life. And I found this Wonder on television, in books, and in condc books.

My mother tells se that my favorite television program of my pre-memory years was Beany and Cecil. Cecil was a sea-sick sea-serpent. (An early delight in irony and sibilant alliteration?) Beany was a cute, chubby little kid with a propellor beanle-cap. (A foreshadow of yasoinatic adventures, encountering all manner of marvel-property of the model of the

I loved my picture books with a passion (this I remember) and would take them to bed with me in favor of the various stuffed teddy bears and the like strewn about the floor. My favorites were the ones with mottled green and other monsters. And dinosaurs! These huge creatures are perhaps a child's first encounter with raw, undiluted Wonder. The prehistoric age is a wonder to behold in the mind's eye, aided by the thick-lettered accounts in kids' picture books. I squished through many a primeval swamp in my dreams those years, persued by all manner of hunongous, green, lizardy beasties who would sprout up suddenly from behind fern trees, gnashing razor-sharp teeth. I was no doubt being chased by a Tyrannosaurus Rex (King of the Dinosaurs!) even as Harlan Ellison pounded out his first of stories. (No relation at all. Harlan's stories are most certainly his nightmares, and no one else's.)

And I encountered the usual mish-mash of the fantastic in the kidr's stuff of the day. I resembte being scared breathless by the banshes in Disney's <u>Darby O'Gill</u> and the little People, awed arthilly by the witch/dragon in <u>Sleeping Beauty</u>, and getting up early on Saturday to watch the various kiddie fantasies. But these are the common lot of the modern tyke. The difference between up and the general sort is that advance between up and the general sort is that advance in years, instead of casting them aside for other more mundam grecocupations. We advance to avid consumation of SF/Fantasy conics, sunday-suppliments, and eventually the untilluted junk-books.

My memories are fairly muddled now of this period in my life. I can't call up a great many details—I suppose they will rise again to the surface of my mind as I grow older. But I do remember the marked delight and enthusi-

THRUST

asm I gave towards all things from which Wonder might be derived.

Comic books for instance.

This is how devoted I was to comic books: I had this coin collection in fourth grade, see, pennies. I had the complete run from like 1900 to 1960. Most in excellent condition, obtained by ceaseless search through parents' change, gifts and after school penny-pitches.

Well, I also had this intense love for comic books. Mostly DC's, as I recall -- Marvel was mostly monster comics in those days, and although those were a kick, they didn't have the continuing appeal that series characters like Superman and Batman (oh, Lord -- Batman!) had to me. I was a pretty poor kid. A paltry allowance, an accasional dime for bits of chores here and there had to suffice. These I'd save faithfully throughout the week, because a dime meant a new comic book. Our suburban home was fairly distant from drug stores and other sources of reading matter; but our charch was in Anacostia, across the river from the bulk of Southeast Washington. Three blocks away, on Nichols Avenue, just down the road from the giant chair set in front of Curtis Brothers' Furniture Store, was the joy of my life, an incredibly wellstocked ! NEWSTAND! whose propietor looked like Oscar Homolka, and always had a cigar half-smoked in his mouth. What a delightful place, with a whole rack filled to bursting with every comic book published. Ah, sweet delight, walking away from the old spire of Anacostia Methodist of a Sunday five-minutes-after-noon, sunny spring, with a dime or three ajingle in my sport jacket, heading toward that place I'd dreamed of all through Sunday School, all through Church and Junior Church. It was one of those hole-in-the-wall stores, not big at all, with a cracked front window sporting the latest interesting magazines on a dusty shelf. Inside was sort of dark and murky, smelling of old tobacco and the old men who came on Sunday mornings for their fat Washington Posts or thinner Washington Stars, which made bulky piles in front of the check-out stands. Across from this were arrayed all the new magazines -- Look, Life, Saturday Evening Post, you-name-it. The newstand also afforded me my first furtive peaks at the female form in the glossy forbidden pages of Playboy, perched just above Confidential and the Police Gazette (which always seemed to have articles about Adolf Hitler still being alive in Argentina.) I would enter the squeeky door, a little bell tinkling news of my arrival, and I would bee-line to the wealth of comic titles peaking up invitingly from their rack. Quickly I'd scan them for new editions, and then fretfully pour over these, trying to decide which ones deserved my hard-won money. Comics selected, I would plunk my dimes upon the counter, the proprietor would twitch his cigar in thanks, and I'd be off back to the church building, hoping that my mother's gossip-time had lasted sufficiently long so that I'd not been missed. You at the other side of these words no doubt have

similar experiences. I sincerely hope that they sparked the same thrill and enthusiasm in your childish breasts-and how lucky you are if you still get the tingle at newstands. For me, it's gone.

But the penny collection ...

My grandmother lived quite close to that newstand, and when I sometimes visited her for a day or two, she'd treat me to a slew of comics. I loved my grandmother. So much better than my disapproving mother, frowning on my innocent comics. (As I recall, my grandmother was the first to purchase for me a copy of Forrie Ackerman's Fanous Monsters of Filmland, and made me cognizant of all the fabulous old movies available on the late show. I troubled my mom for years with tearful entreaties to let me stay up for 'Shock Theatre', but to no avail). I remember one comic my grandmother bought me very well. It was a D.C. , but what made it really special was the full page ad in the middle for the upcoming SUPERMAN annual. For only 25 cents, anyone could buy over 80 pages of the Man of Steel's adventures. And it would be on sale soon!

Well, soon ! came and on the Sunday after, I was broke. No dimes, not to mention quarters. I begged my parents for funds, but my truthful answer to "For What?" brought only frowns. I was desperate! I even tried to rob my brothers' piggy banks (my own was long since depleted) but to no avail.

Ten minutes to departure time, and no money for the Superman annual. I was upset, I was feeling trembling foreshadows of the withdrawal shakes I'd experience on the ride home with no comic book tucked under my arm.

And then I remembered my coin collection, my precious pennies. No. I told myself. They're worth lotsa money, don't...

... but I did.

I even took a couple of buffalo nickels I had stashed away, slipped them into my pocket, to be surrendered for that comic. I had twenty five cents in coin collection.

After church, I hustled down to my newstand, avidly searched for that annual. But it wasn't there. Frightened, I asked the owner. They had not arrived, said he. Heartbreak.

...but, my friend, there's this new Marvel Comic just in you might like, he says, only ten cents. Superhero stuff -- you might enjoy it.

And it was the Fantastic Four. Number mygod 1! I counted out the least valuable of my pennies, and bought that Lee/Kirby collaboration, as a placebo in lieu

of my much desired annual.

Well folks, it was great. And I need not tell you how much that little item is worth today ... or would be worth. You see, I saved all my comics faithfully, reread them again and again. One evening, I was doing so when my mother decided that I should be doing my honework, and she took them all away from me, including FF#1. I never saw them again -- I think she gave them away, or something. Well, I've since pushed in her face just how much those comics accrued in value, but that was really no good. Because what value can you place on Wonder? And there was Wonder in those comics for me--certainly worth far more than the value of a paltry coin collection.

But as for my first sf book ...

I remember it well. I was in third grade, and I had just discovered that there was this separate thing called science fiction, and you could find it in books as well as comics. I checked the school library. I remember skipping over Tunnel in the Sky by someone named Heinlein. Why I don't remember. But I picked out a juvenile called Marooned on Mars about a kid who stows away on a spaceship to Mars. It had neat words like "hydroponics" and "fusion" that I dug, but it was hard to read -- much more difficult than comics. I remember one section concerning the first contact between men and martians. It said they "gestured" at one another to communicate. Well, I mouthed the words in those days, and for years afterwards "gesture" always had a hard "g".

By the way, the book was by Lester del Rey. And of course there was much more--a steady diet of Wonder, impact stepped up by my fierce enthusiasm. All in my pre-ten years, even before I got really hooked up into the mainline of sf.

I only remember bits and pieces of it. But it is an important part of my past, of all our pasts. It is one of the bonds that unites us Wonder-cravers. We understand one another because of that -- at least, to a certain extent. We have all felt the electric passions of Wonder. Seen it brilliance up to highlight and change the contours of day-to-day mundanity.

Like Schelly's observance on joy, we must kiss Wonder as it flies, for if we give it too much scrutiny, it

mists away into nothing.

And perheps even today that childhood wonder is not dead, if indeed it lingers in my memory, and I can hold up its remembered light to change perspective on lacklustre nours.

NEXT COLUMN: "The Death of Wonder" Part 2 -- "The Electric Chair"





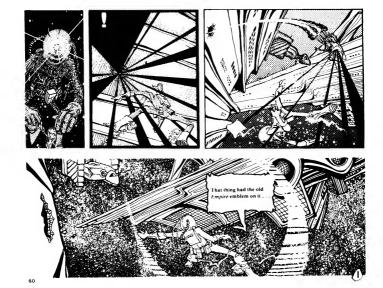


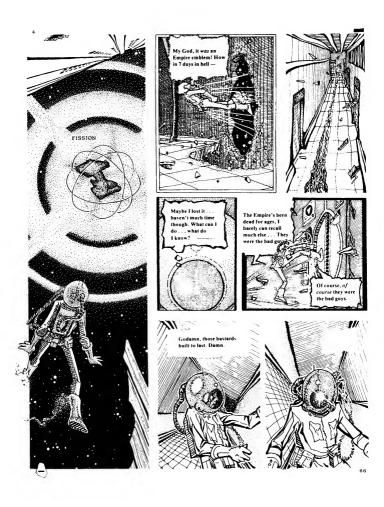






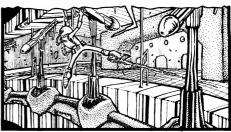
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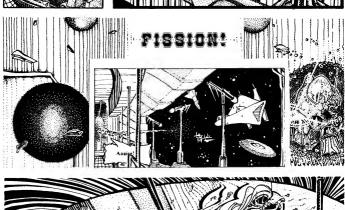


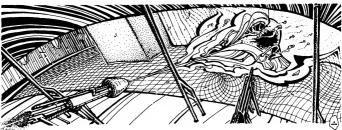


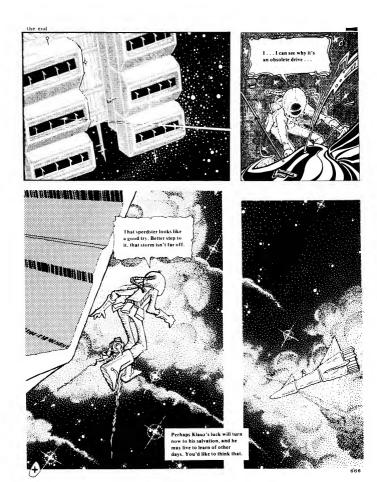


If I recall correctly, the direct effect of a single pulse field reduces a mass to one dimension . . . I hope. Who would think a textbook technique could —











## ECLECTIC COMPANY

a column by CHRIS LAMPTON

Whenever the term "ghetto" comes up in high-minded sf discussions, as it inevitably does, the name Hugo Gernsback is usually bandled about as a forerunner of the Separatist movement. Poor Hugo, who started an inelegant pulpzine fifty-one years ago and filled it with a kind of writing he called "scientifiction"; somehow it caught on and the stimma was born. We haven't outlived it yet.

Well, maybe we have. Sf in the 1970's would seem to be a yenrue oming into its own: our sales are higher, more titles are being published and we're receiving a certain guarded recognition from the mainstream. It's a time when calling yourself a science fiction reader (or, God save us, a science fiction writer) is no longer a cause for mirth. Hardly anyone remembers Buck Rogers anymore: more

people have heard of Dune.

Yet, despite this generous influx of milk and honey, some of our most influential writers have decided to split. Silverberg has retired, Malzberg is, well, phasing himself out (and has recently resurfaced as the co-subtro of a mystery novel, this time under his real name), Ellison has stripped the damning words 'science fiction' consciousness several of our most able practitioners should pack their bags and head for the literary hills, but it is nonetheless fact. Predictably, they have inspired a chorus of catcalls and boos. To hear some fans tell it, Nessrs. Silverberg, Malzberg, Ellison, et al, are baby killers and flag burners; they have bitten the hand that fed them, nurtured them, made them what they are today; their abdicaevery individual fan. He field as a whole and a slap it the face to

Fie! say I. If they want out, let them; I think their reasons are valid. Success in the mainstream pays far more (both financially and critically) than success within science fiction. Unlike, say, mystery writers (Ross MacDonald comes to mind) the science fiction novelist cannot transcend his genre, cross over to mainstream success. And once a writer becomes identified with sf it's damned hard for him to get out, no matter what he writes. Bookstores will insist on placing his books in the of section, though the content be demonstratably otherwise. Filtron'systematic decimantification with the field is no remine blow for the cause: it worked for Kurt Vonnecut, who wrote for Galaxy and P&SF in the early fifties and had a book on the bestseller lists by the late sixties, and it may work again. Vonnegut achieved his end by consistently denying any connection with the sf field. That it took him almost two decades to escape the stigma is not surprising: the public forgives such youthful indiscretions slowly, if at all. If Ellison does as well, he should achieve critical recognition by his sixtieth birthday. Could the Nobel be far behind? There is cause for hope. The "defections" of the above-named writers have been by far the best publicized, but others have quietly fled the field in their wake, some for good and all, some for an occasional dalliance in other pastures. More importantly, some of them are getting away with it: John Jakes became the first author to place three consecutive novels in the number one spot on the <u>New York Times</u> paperback bestseller list; Tom Scortia and Frank M. Robinson have made staggering reprint and film deals on their first two non-sf collaborations: Dean Koontz is earning in the six figure range, turning out three or four mainstream and suspense novels a year under his own name and three (count'em: three!) pseudonyms. The success of Jakes, Scortia, Robinson,

The success of Jakes, Scortia, Robinson, Koontz, et al, would seem to belie the concerns of Silverberg, Malzberg and Ellison: that they have become typed as S writers, that the public (and, more importantly the public (and importantly importantly importantly of the whole story, J,S,R &K (and, for that matter, Vonneughu) made only minor impressions on our field during their sojourns here, scarcely enough to lend them to permanent stereotyping. Silverberg berg and friends, on the other hand, have made a significant impact: they have won awards, produced prolific amounts of clearly science-conventions. Little wonder that they have become identified with the field; after such crimes could they be allowed to leave?

As a science fiction writer of some small pretensions myself, the question seems in- ordinately important. Just how far can I dig my way in before the hole closes up behind me? Wall I wake up one morning to find myself hoper to occupy permanently? Such questions may seem paranoid, but then sf has always been a paranoia-inducing field, either because it attracts a disproportionate number of paranoids to begin with or permanently.

Accordingly, over the last year or two, I have kept more than a casual eye on the progress of my fellow Individual writers in their attempts to escape, or at least expand the bounds of their cages. No important conclusions have been reached, not yet, but an observation would seem to be in order: when an sf writer publishes outside of his usual field he is likely to turn in a much better job than a mainstream writer who attempts to writes fix.

The following, then, is a sampling of nonst works produced by writers who have been at one time or another identified with the science-fiction field. They are presented here in no particular order and the opinions presented are most certainly those of this writer. No one else seems interested in claiming them.

The Class Inferno by Thomas N. Scortia and Frank M. Robinson (Rocket Books, \$1.75, 1974). Scortia, as you're probably aware, is a well-known west coast fan who started publishing professional sf way back before rowal lishing professional af way back before rowal can include Earthwreek and Artery of Fire, both clearly labeled as genre entries; his short stories were recently collected by Doubleday in a volume entitled Caution: Inflammable! Robinson is a former editor of Flayboy (or was he just a contributor?) and the author of was he just a contributor?) and the author of Successful sf novels even. Together they have

turned out one of the best examples of the genre Mainstream Bestseller that I have seen to date.

The Glass Inferno is not a great book; if it were, I doubt that it would be half as much fun. It's the sort of book Arthur Hailey and Harold Robbins have been trying to write for years, but it is immeasurably superior to anything that pair could hope to produce. authors have constructed their book with a flawless sense of melodrama: suspense builds leisurely and inexorably, the characters deve-lop into perfectly turned stereotypes. (Do I sound facetious? In all seriousness, my admiration knows no bounds. A perfectly turned Stereotype is worth its weight in royalty checks.) Aside from its obvious warnings anent construction industry fire codes, the book has no redeeming social value at all. Thank God! It is a wallow of the purest, most mindless kind, a book to be savored in the intervals between thoughts. And it is vastly better than the movie it inspired (The Towering Inferno).

It also, surprisingly, owes a great deal to science-frictional technique: the book contains a wealth of technological detail and the plot itself hinges on a pretty sensational "What if?" Obviously, the authors have done a great deal of homework here. The sense of verisimilitude is overwhelming. Recommended.

Less successful, though every bit as ambitious, is the Prometheus Crisis (Bantam, \$1.95, 1975). One comes away with the impression that Scortia and Robinson signed the contract on the basis of an idea, then failed to find a book in it. The premise seems fine on first examination: inadequate safeguards lead to a cataclysmic accident in a nuclear power plant. But the plot wobbles like an elliptical wheel. The ultimate disaster is their stretch, short long before it reaches its "true" climax.



SF IN REVIEW 31

## COUNTER LETTERS LETTERS THRUSTS

Harry Warner, Jr. 423 Summit Avenue Hagerstown, MD 21740

Before galloping senility struck, I would have written you much more promptly to tell you that I enjoyed Thrust#7 and to express pleasure in

finding you still active in fandom. I sort of lost track of you for a while, something that isn't difficult to do now that fandom has outgrown its britches so far in numbers of participants. // The Harlan Ellison interview was almost as good as you proclaimed it in your editorial. Some sections of it sound like pages out of a Barry Malzberg novel about science fiction pros, others reveal what I am convinced is the real Harlan Ellison (a much nicer person than the mask he wears so much would indicate), and I'm sure that future researchers will pounce upon it in their efforts to untangle the contridictions in the Ellison person and behavior, // Strangely, while I was reading the unexpected semi-praise for network television from Harlan, it occured to me that this image he projects is very close to the function that some writers have attributed to television itself. Just sit back, appreciate what's going on at this instant, don't try to fit it into a coherent whole or analyse it as you would a painting or story, and you'll get the maximum happiness from either a television set or Harlan Ellison. His paean to his immortality as a writer of prose, for instance, is wonderful reading and I imagine it must have been even more riviting to those who were on hand to hear and see him as he spoke those words. The only way to spoil it is to think about it too much: remember that science fiction short stories are the most perishable things imaginable in literature because they age so quickly, and you start to lose faith. (Here in 1977, no short science fiction written a hundred years ago is readable except as curiosities or fuel for stoking a researcher's fires, virtually no short science fiction from the earliest part of the 20th century survives except Wells, and occasional reprints from the 1910's through the start of the Campbell era are offered with patronizing explanations about how a sense of wonder once made them seem better than they are. All the short science fiction of the 1970's that seems so advanced and relevent today will turn into ludicrous period pieces, with an occasional exception, before the nation's tricenntennial.) // But the greatest value of this interview was the section which revealed Harlan's admission that he watches junk on television to relax when he's tired. I encountered exactly the same sort of statement in John D. MacDonald's The House Guests. This is precious to me because in the past year or two I've been doing exactly the same thing, after having sternly planned my television viewing all my life, rationing myself to a limited amount of viewing to leave time for more important things. When I found myself turning on the set at times when I should be doing other things, just because I felt the need to relax, I suspected that I was going straight to hell mentally and morally. But when I find an older person than myself and a younger person than myself both doing the same thing because they get tired of literary labors, I feel much better, having salvaged at least some of my self-respect and feeling myself closer to the remainder of humanity through the fact that I've discovered others with undependable will power about television watching. // David Bischoff's article was very amusing. I'm sure I couldn't have forgiven Harlan for such overreaction to a lukewarm review as he did, and David emerges as quite a hero as a result. The article also somehow managed to reawaken quite a few memories of the atmosphere of Discon II, even though I didn't witness any of the specific episodes described here. It almost makes me feel the urge to go to another worldcon, and it's been

only three years since the last one I attended. // The artwork is splendid, particularly the cover and centerfold. The latter disoriented me for a while, but I think I know now which way is up. The middle tones are reproduced with much greater fidelity than normally occurs in offset fanzines. // I'm of two minds about your future plans for Thrust. It would be foolish to complain about having another fanzine with the appearance and quality of Algol, in one sense. In another, I can't stop worrying about the growing tendency of good fanzines to evolve into semi-pro publications, for several reasons, They tend to feature material by professional and semi-professional writers, making it hard for fans to get their writings exposed in the most prestigious fanzines. There's always the danger of the occasional transformation to semi-pro status turning into a real trend, setting impossible standards for neofans to meet when they publish their first issues. And I miss in the faultless fanzines like Algol the informality and reckless abandon that has always characterized fanzines. Additionally, there's the danger that quite a few good fanzine editors will fall by the wayside when they find themselves unable to meet the financial demands of the luxury-type publication. I hope I'm as wrong about all this as I've been about most matters which I've worried about in the past.

/I don't think you can really compare of stories written one hundred years ago as they are seen today with sf stories written today and how they will be viewed in one hundred years, especially non-technological stories like Harlan's. After all, Edgar Allan Poe did not date. Stories appealing to basic human emotions can usually hold up. // I sometimes even use television as background noise to lower my concentration level when I'm doing more tedious and boring work. // Maybe it was a mistake to make any comparison of Algol and Thrust. But the differences will be apparent as time goes on. is much more centered in the professional world than Thrust is and will be. 7

P.O. Box 315 McLean, VA 22101

James Tiptree, Jr. Hate to disappoint, but if you could see my desk--and my low blood count-you'd know why I can't write you anything worthwhile about Thrust#7. I've

only had time to glance through it, and enjoy the vignette of Ellison intimidating the hotel. (And I agree that under all that is a sweet guy.) Now before the people who think I'm working on stuff they've contracted for catch me and break my arm, here's wishing you luck and thanks again.

That's okay, Tip, just glad to see you're still alive, and still living in that post office box.

Grant Carrington Rox 14378 - University Station Gainesville, FL 32604

Thanks for the copy of Thrust. I was much more impressed than I had expected to be. Ton Monte-

leone had shown me a much earlier issue, and the improvement is surprising. The artwork, though, was a shade celow the quality I've come to expect from fanzines. But I don't get many fanzines, and most of them are the quality ones-Knights, Algol, Nickelodeon, etc. I am still in awe of the illustrating talent, the artistic talent, that is so abundant in fandom. Unfortunately, there aren't nearly as many talented writers as there are talented artists. I don't mean that your artwork was bad; it just wasn't quite up to the very high standards I have become used to. Steve Hauk's cover was the best, followed by

his illo for the Harlan Ellison interview; worst was a tie between all three of Richard Bryant's illos, // Your editorial was confusing. Is Thrust your fanzine or the UM SF Club fanzine? // The Ellison interview was interesting, but then you cheated. You interviewed Harlan. I would like to see an uninteresting Harlan Ellison interview. Bischoff's experiences with Harlan were of interest and I enjoyed The Alienated Critic, while not always agreeing. I think that it would have been better if, instead of reviewing the books you did, you had done a critical article on Harlan's works. With the recent spate of Pyramid books, it would have been timely and relatively easy. // Also, while I found the Ellison interview interesting, it was old ground. How about interviews with some of the new young turks? George R.R. Martin, Spider Robinson, George Alec Effinger. What I'm leading up to is Tom Monteleone. Tom's second book has just come out, he's a secretary of SFWA, he's just edited an anthology, and he's a natural for Thrust, having gotten his BA and MA at the University of Maryland. To the best of my knowledge, he hasn't been interviewed by anyone yet. So a Tom Monteleone Issue of Thrust seems like a natural. // Let me repeat that I did enjoy Thrust very much, and my criticisms are really quite minor.

Thanks, Grant. I think this issue's editorial should clear up the systemy of what Thrust is. At the time of my editorial last issue, I really didn't know. As for a Tom Monteleone Issue, only time will tell. And I do hope to begin including critical articles on the writings of the authors featured in the future. I wanted to this issue, but none of my offers to write it were accepted, and I just didn't have time to write an article myself that would do justice to Ted's work.

Pamela Sargent

Thank you very much for the issue P.O. 30x 586 of Thrust. I very much apprecia-Johnson City, NY 13790 ted your kind words about Women

Women of Wonder as well. Thrust is one of the more interesting publications I've seen lately and I look forward to the next issue.

/And we look forward to seeing more books edited or written by you./

on D'Annassa .9 Angell Drive

I was very happy to see myself on your mailing list, if for East Providence, RI 02914 no other reason than to read

the fine interview with Harlan Ellison. Following a speaking engagement nearby a month ago, Ellison spent a few hours here, and despite the rather hectic circumstances of his visit was both pleasant and entertaining. I suspect a good deal of the bad press he gets in fanzines results from the fact that he is unwilling to put up with the real nerds among us (and there certainly are some) where other writers often seem too civilized to respond in the fashion those individuals deserve. // I didn't really think that Flight of the Herse had all that much scientific background. In fact, there are contradictions in logic in some of the stories. Miven considers time travel by definition to be fantasy. // I remember the flap about the Bischoff and Shoemaker reviews of Again Dangerous Visions in WSFA Journal, though I had not connected Bischoff's mame with it. Dare say I thought Ellison to be about 75% correct. // I am happy to see that Linds Issaes found The Stochastic Man to be a good novel, but I am disappointed that the only reasons she cites are that the chapters are short and easy to read. This is hardly the basis for a good review. // In general, I found the book reviews to be too short to be very entertaining or informative. I'm sercon by nature and love to argue about the relative merits of various books, but there aren't enough hooks in these suickies to start anything.

John Thiel Lafayette, IN 47904

I was glad to see the Ellison 30 North 19th Street interview. So far as T know, this is the first interview with a pro that's been printed for two years

that wasn't made up by the author for gain, or a hoax. So it was real exciting! Harlan's right there, man, with all his style, and that picture you drew of him really captures him, although it makes it clear that everyone else has failed to do so. In fact, it has everything that an interview should have, except that I don't like Harlan Ellison or his works, nor do I care what he's doing or planning to write: but you do have a first. Fllison appreciators ought to be as happy as nuts. I'm going to recommend it in my fanzine, and also The Alienated Critic, a column much better than Geis' zine. It's easier to understand, more clear and vivid, and I like the way you spin that twirp Elwood. I don't expect Elwood to recover from this blow, as Geis might say. And a few lines were uproarious -- "For example, Allen is apparently unaware that Stranger in a Strange Land by Robert Heinlein was written in two parts several years apart." Very subtle, and effective. It makes me feel paranoid. // I suspect that the huge list of cons you mentioned were in one way or another hoaxes, but thanks for printing them. I was at Chicon, and it really was there, so you have one score. Too bad you don't list the ChamBanacon, which my friend is attending, or you'd have another definitely real one. // The book reviews were, in my opinion, nothing. Even the zwei books that were worthy, Pohl & Williamson's and Haldeman's, looked trite in terms of your reviews. They all made me feel like you didn't understand the books. But at least I could see you read them. // What's the meaning of this cruddy, sleasy centerfold? At least I know I won't hurt the artist by disdaining a thing like that. May Ron Smith see it in his grave, or brothel, or whatever. Is that Tom Bombadil in Adam's illo? And is Linda Isaacs a spy for Asimov? // One of the worst things about Thrust was its format. It has no coherency, no ethos, or mode, you might say. Nor is there any sequence to the contents or explanatory emphasis on the various factors found within. This made the zine look uninteresting and haphaz-ard. // How would a fan go about making the girl on the

/Huh? // Ch yes, thanks for the letter, John. I hate to disappoint you, but, you see, Thrust is all a hoax too. just print up one copy and send it to you.

Richard K. Fifield Box 119, Co. D. Marsptbn Torii Station APO San Francisco 96331

I received Thrust today, and I liked it. The cover by Steve Hauk was beautiful. With controlled black areas and a few

well-placed lines, he created the impression of a very beautiful woman. // Your review column, as they always are, was interesting, although I wish you hadn't unconsiously compared yourself to Dick Geis with that rip-off title. // Dave Bischoff's accompanying article was amusing and insightful. It doesn't leave one with a very great impression of Ellison, though, But Bischoff's conclusion shows him to be just as blindly faithful to his mentor as ever,

Brenden Dubois 283 Dover Point Road Dover, NH 03820

Thrust#7 was a very enjoyable issue. For one thing, I was glad that there are some fans out there who like Harlan Ellison and his writing

and who don't spend their time cutting him down. // Steve Hauk's cover was nice, and I like the restful blue that you've chosen for it. The rest of the art was pretty scarce, but I did particularly enjoy the centerspread that Richard Bryant did. // Of course, I really found it a pleasure to read the interview and article about Harlan Ellison. Harlan is such a dynamic and talented writer; I doubt that I could ever get bored by anything he writes or savs.



### reviewed by chris lampton

NEG THE SWORD by Piers Anthony (Corgi, 1975)

Fiers Anthony's career blossosed like a supernow in the late 1950's with the publication of three of the most remarkable books in recent sf: Chihon, Sos the Rope and Macroscope. His later work, with the exception of the unser-rared Riggs of Lee, has by comparison shrunk to dwarf proportions. None of it is bad, some of it is exception to the second of the later to the later t

height shord is the third volume in a urlogy that began with Soc. Soth Neg and its immediate predecessor, Var no Sikok, pale in comparison with the original. It would be scarcely worth sentioning, in fact, if not for two idstinctions; it is the most violent of Anthony's across and it contains two of the most startling plot twiste in recent memory. Whether or not you find such distinctions appealing is a matter of taste; I could do without the former but an somewhat grateful for the latter. In a sense, Meg is a grusome parody of the machine-tooled sword and sorvery fiction lesses writers grin out by the yard, anthony repeatedly leads his pulls the rug out from under their feet. The effect is, well, unnerving.

For some reason, this book is not availiable in an American edition; not yet, anyaya. Anthony never seems to have found a secure home among publishers in this country; he bounces from one to another like an unwanted relative. In <u>Outcorids</u> a couple of years ago, he mentioned that there are something like eight unsold, considered the seems of the property of the seems of the property of the seems of the s

BID TIME RETURN by Richard Matheson (Ballantine, 1976,  $\frac{51}{2}$  25)

In is perhaps unfair that Richard Matheson's reputation has always been greater among mudane dabblers than actence fiction fans. A college classmaste once told me he liked sf, and Matheson was the only mame he could recall. I was amused at the time, secure in the knowledge that I had tasted stronger stuff, but ay smugness later faded: Over the years, ay appreciation of his talents has increased a hundredfold. He is weak in the areas where other of writers are strong--his ideas unoriginal, his science shakey--but, Lord, can he tell a story.

Bid Time Return is one of the two or three best books that I have read they ear, of or otherwise; and I have read perhaps one hundred and fifty thus far. It's not strictly sf, as there is no attempt to rationalize its phenomena technologically. It does something, however, that few sf novels have ever done; it makes the concept of time travel vividly, chillingly real. Matheson's 1506 is very real. The reader can tast it, smell it, do very thing is not considered the same than the control of the second section of the control of the control of the second seco

There are a few shor irratations early on. The nowelbegins as series of observations sade into a tape recorder and they read like, well, observations read into a tape recorder. Any disconfort, however, is strictly temporary; once the book develops momentum, the style crosses to satter. He satisfies to stright nurrative half-book in one sitting. The reading quickly becomes compulsive.

The premise, alas, is pure Twilight Lone; a young writer falls in love with a nineteenth century actress-or
rather her photograph-and travels back in time to meet
her. Don't let that put you off. Matheson is a narrative virtuoso; the plot hardly creaks at all, in fact it
sparkles. It is the mark of a superior writer that he
can take well-worn merchanics and make the seen inovative.

I can only seek to recommend this novel to as wide an audience as possible. I plan to read it again, and that's as high a compliant as I's prepared to give,

<u>THE GARMENTS OF CAEAN</u> by Barrington J. Bayley (Doubleday, 1976, \$5.95)

Barrington J. Bayley, who first appeared in the pages of New Yorids back in the sixties, seems to have energed from the so-called new wave debancle relatively unscatted. God knows, he could never be sixtaken for a new wave the tre, even if such a thing existed. His early work appeared beside that of Ballari and Moorcock; nevertheless, he is resclutely old-fashioned, a reamant of some earlier, less protechnic school of science flotion writing.

There's a certain charm to that. This novel hardly state the world on fire, yet it is readable, undenanding, and entertaining. The plot is an old one, but not an overused one. It goes back as far as Richard Matheson's "Glothes Make the Man," perhaps further. A tailor-or sartorial, as he prefers to be called--finds a sarvelous suit and when puts it on, it takes over his personality. That's not all, but that's the part of the plot that satters. There's also some speculation on interestellar satters are supported by the satter of the satter end, the Secret of the Suit is revealed, along with syriad other wonders.

No. it's really not all that exciting Bayley is neither an impressive stylist or a writer of great depth. He does have a certain ingratiating warsth, a feel for characters tossed helplessly on the turbulent sea of unable to the styling of the styling of the styling of unternative that a writer could make his living on. It is certainly enough to sake this book worth reading.

### BRIDGE OF ASHES by Roger Zelazny (Signet, 1976, \$1.25)

To call Bridge of Ashes Noger Zelasny's worst novel no not necessarily to do it a disservice. When Zelasny is good, he is very, very good; he is argelle. He scars, he sings, he glistens; he is a true titan of the field, in scae ways perhaps the best it has yet produced. When becomes, by his standards, tepli, uninspired and repetitive—as he has through most of the seventies—he scall, it is painful to gee his sortality showing; when one consorts with gois, the fall from grace is all the more painful.

Enough pretentiousness. This is a readable, serviceable, flawed novel, what is generally termed a yosenlike perforance. It's murt badly by a hastily put-togather ending, the sort of thing Heinlain used to do in his brash youth, when he was tired of a story after 50,000 words. Zelazny's probles, I suspect, is not so such boredon as lack of direction; he introduced three dispartes plots here and Iries to draw then together in the yields the support of the support of the support of the problem of the support of the support of the problem of the problem of the support of the support of the support of the not and the novel suffered accordingly.

Worse still, the book lacks the sense of sardonic irony that suffused all of Zelamny's earlier novels. While that lack may not in itself be fatal, it goes a long way toward undermining the exceptional chara of Zelamny's prose. In comparison with his best work, this seems amenic as if it were lacking in some essential vitamins. Too much here is perfunctory; one longs to what only recent success, so delightful. In one form or another, the hunor that fueled all of Zelamny's previous work is not here and there's nothing to take its place. The lack is pairful; it almost destroys the novel. It remairs worth reading, but scarcely worth remembering.

### STARBRIDGE by Jack Fillianson and James E. Gunn (Berkley, \$1.50, 1977)

There are times, early on in the proceedings, when Starbridge threatens to become a good book. By all rights it should have been; it's authors are in the first rank of their respective literary generations, Berkley Books evidently found it worthy of republication after better than two decades out of print, Gerahl Jonas in the New York Times Book Review gave it an unqualified rave, Better still, it would seem on brief inspection to combine the strong points of both its creators: Junn's knack for slick, if superficial, prose, and Williamson's penchant for original concepts. Why then does the novel lites' twoere and clunk like a coal-powered space liner?

Who knows? Collaboration is at best a tricky business and, let's face it, even Snakespear wrote some applys. The plot, an undistinguished variation on the Ow Man Against an Empire choestmut, had whiskors when Jules 'Gerne was in dispors. The proce, while undentably not without that Irulary residable, for, the book is not without that Irulary residable, for, the book of or without that Irulary residable, for, the book is for without that Irulary residable, for, the book is been seen as the process of the process

though there are times when he comes close. But, damn it, it still doesn't work.

Two pens are not always mightler than one. The field of shas produced its share of sucessful collaborating teams, Pohl and Kormbluth, Pratt and de Camp, Niven and Fournelle, but they are the exceptions. Like marriages, it's hard to say why they succed. For Gunn and Williamson, the honeymon was over before the ceremony could

### reviewed by linda isaacs

THE BEST FROM ORBIT, VOLUMES 1-10 edited by Damon Knight (Berkley Medallion, 1976, \$1.95)

This volume contains twenty-eight stories from Damon Knight's Orbit anthology series; some are gens and some are less glittering.

The book is preceded by an introduction that says nothing in particular, and may as easily have been omitted. Each story is introduced by a paragraph or two of disjoint epitiary, often on throwing any light on the stories, but sometimes focusing on mittor/writer problems. (The intro to Carol Carr's story is a Dear Carol letter that has the old familiar 'I liked your story, but would you change the ending' And get a new title?')

In cost, this volume comes to about seven cents a story, and at that price, one can skip over the less thrilling stories and gloat over the others. Who cares it trying to discover the meaning of Russ's "Gleepsite" is like trying to read the Wall Street Journal through a bowl of chopped jello?

Now for some of the better stories:

Long time readers of Orbit know that Knight features Kate Wilhelm, James Sallis, Gene Wolfe and R.A. Lafferty. They are all represented here, of course, with the kind of stories you'd expect from writers of their callbre.

"The Secret Place" by the late Richard McKema won the Nebula in 1966. It's a story about Duard Lewis, who, with the Army, is looking for a deposit of uranium in Barker, Gregon. The army never locates the uranium, and Lewis keeps his mouth shut about what's really out there. The style is dense, with well-done descriptions of the Gregon countryside. One thing that bothers me is that Duard is attracted to Helen, a girl in a woman's body. By the end of the story, he loves her, even though the only positive trait she exhibits is the ability to enjoy herself in her fantasy world, when she's not too self-conscious about it.

"The Doctor" by Ted Thomas tells of a modern doctor thrown a half sillion years into the past he starts wantering from cave to cave trying to treat the sick-and everyone seems to be sick. Life is low, sean, masty and brutish for the pre-sen. Although the story was extremely compelling and interesting, I can't help wondul trutes. I also question the decrease almost immediate recovery from the death of his son.

"Nother of the World" by Richard Wilson, winner of the Nebula in 1968, is one of those 'after the war' stories, but with a fresh point of view. The last two people on Earth are Martin and his retarded sister, Siss, The story handles the subject of incest, which to me is both repugnant and unworkable in this case. Even if Siss became a baby machine, the race, I think, is still just

"Passengers" by Rotert Silverberg took the Nebula in 1969. It is an excellent portrait of the psychology of people who find theaselves possessed by unseen allens. The story contains the plot and style that really makers one look forward to reading Silverberg. The characters are so well drawn, it's as if this were a technicolor screen excreience.

"Look, You Think You've Got Troubles" by Carol Carr was her first appearance in Orbit. It is a delightful story of a nice Jewish girl who marries an alien--papa



takes a dim view of the whole thing. The style is Sholom Alaichem, light and fun to read. I hope Carol comes out with more stories of this type; she has the knack.

Gene Wolfe's The Island of Doctor Death" has young Tackle Babock living in a world of childhood adventure fantasy. He does an sinirable job at the difficult task of writing it in the second person. Isages are vivid affitting for a childhood scenario. This is the type of story that really could happen-in a child's aind.

This book is actually some of the best from Orbit; the good stories are very good, the others many times very weak. It is a good cross-section of Orbits 1-10, however, and is a welcome addition to my bookshelf.

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ALPHA 6 edited by Robert Silverberg (Berkley Medallion, 1976, \$1.50)

The cover proclains this to be "The acclaimed anthology series that forms a definitive solence fiction library," but the content does not live up to that claim. Silvergeng's introduction asys the works are representative of the field, and he's right; there has been good and had work dome. He has presented about half and half; I found six of eleven excellent, four weak, and one on which I reserve judgement.

Let's look at the good stuff, "The lost Continent" of Morman Spirmed is a well-turned tale of the Seeline of the U.S., showing where all our technology and lack of environmental protection may lead us. Spirmed is probably sf's most politically oriented writer, and this is one of his most searching explorations of that theme. It's a horrifying tale where tourists to the U.S. have to wear goggles and nose filters,

sic story of recycled human beings. It was written during the Elsenhower years before recycling came into vogue; it is a story shead of its time. Humans are brought allwe again (as in Silverberg's "Born with the Dead") so they can fight that eternal war out in space. The idea of 'rekinging' is repugnant, and that is precisely what keys the reading.

"Short in the Cheef" by Idris Seatright (Margaret St. Clair) is a bit of mry hunor. The style and conton the typical of the fifties. Robot psychologists, for some obscure reason called "mutiles," advise people on their problems in this brave new world. A short in the chest of one hunkley makes it advise people to consit mayhem on eachother. The story is interesting as a bit of fifties nostalgia, but no landmark in sf.

"Brown Robert" by Ferry Carr is interesting because it was Terry's first published story in 1962 as well as in its own right. If you like time travel stories, this one will be particularly enjoyable. The pitfall is the acvement of our planet through space. Inventor Robert Ernsohn should have tested his devise on a guinea pig first, before himself.

"An Honorable Death" by Gordon Dickson is a look at alien psychology and our legly American out there on an alien planet. This is a classic story of the wors turnings os looky than thooky innew it was happening all along. It is valid present-day social comment, and, in this case, everyone gets what they deserve in the end,

"Man of Parts" by Horace Gold is one of the few stories written during his Galaxy editorship, and is one of those surprise ending stories that's really a surprise. There is much sense of wonder in the story of Gan New Blad who bounces on his bedspring leg and ests rock. There's nothing deep here, just pure entertainment.

I suppose hitting 50% isn't bad, but I can't help hoping that Silverberg can give less definitiveness and more consistant quality in future Alphas.

### reviewed by dennis bailey

MISSION TO UNIVERSE by Gordon R. Dickson (Ballantine, \$1.50. 1977)

A publisher's note on the first page of this book explains that it was originally published in 1955, and "the author has found portions of the novel which he believed could be improved," which he rewrote for this edition. It is certainly surprising that upon rereading the book after twelve years, he actually found it worth reworking. Mission to Universe is a badly written book.

The plot is simple; at a secret installation somewhere in the United States, sometime in the near future. a team of civilian scientists has been working under government direction for eight years to develop a faster Due to the than light spacecraft called a "phase-ship." world political situation, described as "fifty nations with gigaton bombs and all ready to shoot the first time anybody sends up a toy Fourth of July rocket," the President orders a halt to test plans for the phase-ship. Benjamin Shore, the director of the project, determines to go ahead with the test on his own authority, while allowing his crew to believe that they are doing so under government orders. He manages to obtain commissions in the United States Air Force -- he himself is made a Brigadier General -- and proceeds to commit treason in his dedication to seek out "a new home for mankind" among the stars.

So the phase-shlp, which has a completely untested drive-unit, takes off on a voyage "to such ultimate limits of space and time as the outermost reaches of the physical universe and for a voyage of Torever and a day." The major portion of the novel deals with the adventures of the property of the property of the property of the property of the dangerous planet after another, facing peraces ranging from slavering hoardes of BEMs through natural disasters to fuzzy little creatures but practice enotional torture and mini-control on our hero, General Ben Shore, Finally, they locate a planet that's perfect for human beingst when would is already inhabited, but that's okay because the world is already inhabited, but that's okay because the deed to the blace annumy.

Mission accomplished. Sen Shore turns the ship around and returns to Earth, nobly willing to face diagrace and charges of treason (along with murder and a possible death sentenne) in order to bring his gift to mankind. Surprises as soon as the phase-ship left, world tensions collapsed and humanity started to get itself together. Shore is an international hero; he rides in parades, gets to meet the Fresident, and is offered an important position to the theory Space Program. Shore to Not impressed that the property of the

I'd like to say that the novel is an entertaining adventure story, a clever tale of allen exploration. I can't. Although Mission to Universe is well-paced and the perils in which Dickoon places his characters are sometimes creative, the book is poorly thought out. One major example early in the book, it's established that the phase-ship can make careful orbital examinations of a world's surface-even down to noting the dietary habits of the local fauna-before landing. Further, as each landing brings higher crew casualities, Ben Shore requires sore elaborate investigations, precautions, and safe-guards before allowing the ship to land.

Nonetheless, twice the phase-ship is insediately attacked by hostile mattives who are capable of disabiling the ship and holding the crew captive. In both cases, Shore was certain that no intelligent life existed on the planets at all, such less in the vivinity of the plannet landing area. In either case, no plausible justification

for the oversight is given.

The hockground against which the story takes place is not well-conceived, Dickson's main interest seems to be in describing the experiences of the phase-ship orew as they explore the galaxy; it's therefore reasonable that he doesn't dwell long on the details of the Earth's political situation. However, that situation notivates so many of Shore's decisions that one wishes it would have been dealt with less simplistically. If you believe that politics is a business of faceless little sen saking all the wrong decisions for worse reasons; if you can be lieve in Dickson's future world. I thought it less plausible than Richard Nixon's statements about the Watergate burglary.

The characterization of Eenjamin Shore also bothered me. He is not a career military man; he is an extremely intelligent and competent man, an expert in fields as diverse as aircraft design and surgery. He is supposed to

be a humane man.

Ben Shore case to the conclusion that the only way to quarantee the survival of his crew-trewt-eight people he has known and worked with for years-is to run the phase-ship like Gaptain Pillp. If someone smiles at him, he snaris back. He brooks no dissent among his officers, He demands—and manifely gets—instant obelience to thoroughly unreasonable orders, and remember, none of this way of running the ship, works so well that he only, Itls way of running the ship, works so well that he only, loses about a third of his crew during the course of the book.

Through all of this, Ben Shore has a bad case of internal bleeding, it esteeps badly, condeans himself for every death, longs to be a nice guy, and lusts after the pretty starship Head Nurse in his heart. But he can't behave like a human being-he can't think of a better way to run a starship 'nah by threat and arger.

Is it reasonable that a human being, even a caricature, can so completely divorce his outer nature from his true inward feelings. I think it's carrying Carte-

sian dualism a bit far.

Dickson has Shore constantly agontsing over moral dilemans, all of winch turn out to be straw men. Example: Shore feels that by lieing to his crew he has effectively kidnapped then, and that every death is therefore innocent blood on his hands. When, upon returning to Earth, Shore is called a hero and generally told by others that everything ne did is okay by them, his sense of culpability seems to disappear.

Example: Since ashors the thought that humans should go into space as conquerows, taking home planets from other races for human use. Annirable, When the phase-ship finally (finis a suttaile world for humans, this problem is resolved. Che encounter with the natives makes it clear to Shore that they are degenerates (they didn't behave sensibly-they attacked the phase-ship) and the reader is given to undertaint inta they drove the origin

nal inhabitants of the world out some time ago. If they did it, then it's permissable for us to do the same thing to them. The fact that their civilization is something like one humired thousand years old has, of course, no bearing on Shore's assessment of them as unworthy--indeed headed for "racial extinction."

Aside from matters of plot, background, characterisation and sorth values (I know the last is a matter of individual belief, and I suppose a case can be sade for the "only good Indian is a dead Indian" school of thought), I wish Dickson had considered the sense of samy of the statements and in this book. There are some real stop-

Example: "The people want to live, the Congress wants to live, even the President wants to live," (page 11, emphasis mine).

Example: "Matt and I,' said Jay Treaple a little inpatiently. 'It's all right, isn't it?' He was actually, Ben saw, standing on one foot ready to go." (page 49). Interesting, but unlikely.

All things considered, I didn't like Mission to Uni-

verse, and I don't recommend it.

### reviewed by doug fratz

<u>CEMETERY WORLD</u> by Clifford D. Simak (Berkley Medallion, 1964, \$1.25)

Cemetery World is an interesting but nervermacking book to read. Instead of van Vogt's new idea every 800 words, this book has a sudden, radical change in situation and plot flow every 800 words. Just as the plot seems to be going in an interesting direction, zap, everything's changed.

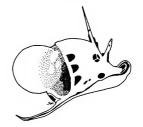
The book if full of interesting ideas. The story takes place on a future earth that has been shadnoned by civilization except for a corporation that uses huge areas for a massive cemetry. The protagonist is an artist, and along with an intelligent robot, a less intelligent machine to record "ispressions" of Earth and a female, they spend the whole book romaing around the wilderness being hassled by the people who run cemetry. The ending is a let down, however, it's basically just a few pages tying up all the many loose ends in the novel in one fall swoop.

There are enough fascinating ideas in this book to make it worth reading, but not a whole lot else.

TIME AND AGAIN by Clifford D. Simak (Ace, \$1.75)

Time and Again, although written in 1951, still stands as the most definitive statement on the theme of "human manifest destiny" yet done in novel form.

The plot is fascinatingly complex; the protagonist is a space pilot named Asher Sutton who returns to Earth symbiotically connected with an alien being. It's all on a grand scale, and, most importantly, with a theme to match.



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The novel takes a deep and surprisingly unprejudiced look at the question of whether it is aman's right to conquer the galaxy, as he has already conquered Earth. This book is must reading for anyone interested in giving serious thought to the idea of "human manifest destiny."

<u>PHE TIME CONNECTION</u> by Thomas F. Monteleone (Popular Library, 1976, \$1.25)

Ton's second novel shows great improvement, and that he can handle a story of novel length with excellent pacing and prose. It's the story of an archeologist and a strange girl finding a box that takes then into a war-dewastated future.

It's all very interesting reading, if you can overlook one very major flaw. The whole plot should never have happened.

The strange girl was actually from the future, planted in the past, with a nicro-encoded thing in her head containing the genetic make-up and memories of a legion of people. She was hidden in the past, so the aliens who now run Earth wouldn't destroy her, and the whole novel is her and the archeologist following clues all over the city to get to the place where the

machines will recreate manking two place is hidden from the allers. The thing in the girl's head is useless without the machines, and visa-verma. If you think about it, however, there is no real reason to however there is no real reason to planting the information of implanting the information of the void to just as safe with the machines; in fact, much nore safe,

I'll be looking forward to future novels by Ton, but I won't often be looking back on this one.

SOLARIS by Stanislaw Lem (Berkley Medallion, 1971, \$1.50)

This book takes the expertly realized idea of an intelligent ocean, adds well done suspense and background, and ends up being quite good reading. Len pulled off a fantastic idea here.

The flaws are there, though. The book emied abruptly and without resolution. And the characters are now; annoying, behaving totally unlike scientists. The whole plot is maintained and the suspense generated by the main characters being almost psychotically sceretive.

But the totally fascinating concept makes the book

well worth reading.

EVEN MORE BRIEFLY MENTIONED:

A JUNCIE OF STARS by Jack L. Chalker (Ballantine, 1976, \$1.50) Jack's first novel is a classic space open with most of the action on Earth. The main flaw is in the main character. All the empathy for his built up throughout the book is shat upon when he callously eliainates the voman he supposedly loved.

STELLAR SHORT NOVELS ditted by Judy-Lynn del Rey (Sallantine, 1976, \$15.50) Stellar contains three short novels. Gordy Dickson does a beautiful, sensitive and realistic story of the Loch Ness somster. Andy Offutt contributes an interesting, but, I think, since, pel-botanical surfer systery story. Last, new writer Rich Weinstein does a story about coopulation of the contributes. The think story about a coopulative creatures. The think surface of the coopulation of the development of an underwater technology. The characterization is very immature, however; the two main characters work together ten

years in a relationship that would be hard to maintain for ten months.

DUES IMAE by Philip K. Dick and Roger Zelazny (Doubleday, 1976, \$5,95). Not even the combined talents of two of the greatest as writers saved this novel from being a dog. It's a ridiculous hodgepodge of religion, Tolkien Quest, and the worst flaws with few of the benefits of Dick and Zelazny.

THE GRAYSPACE BRAST by Gordon Exlumd (Doubleday, 1976, \$5.95)
This is a rather good version of the old gotta-kill-thesomater-formed-from-the-evilof-a-whole-civilization story, made interesting by having the story given by one of very characters to a class or very characters to a class or very realine.

SUGED OF THE DEMON by Richard A. Lupoff (Marper & Row,1976, \$7.95) This is a dull, boring book that reads like a poor translation of an obscure Japanese fantasy story, it follows no logic, all solutions are rabits-out-ofthe-hat, and contrary to the feeling of the first few pages, it's not sf. Not recommended at all,

### But the totally fascinating conceptions the LAMPTON cont. from page 31

Are they protecting us from what Lowcraft sight have called "the things an was not aent to know?" In the course of the novel, the authors pant and puff to generate supense, but the result is sore contrived than cownfoing. The characters, while still cliched, lack the archetypal quality of those in the previous book, and i, for one, dishrigher a dann what happened to them. The punch line, of course, is that it doesn't really astern in the end what happens to the characters; this is a disaster that affects us all. But by the time that becomes apparent, you may well have ceased to characters; this is a disaster that affects us all. But by the time that becomes apparent, you may well have ceased to sythic feel to it; nuclear fishage, while intellectually terrifying, say nothing to the reader's gat. As a tract, The Prometheus Crisis may have some virtues, but as a novel it has none. Not recommended at all.

The Bastard by John Jakes (Fyranid, \$1.75, 1974). It seems unfair to review a book of which I have read only half, but in this case, since the book divides up neatly into two virtually separate 300-page novels, I feel justified in doing so. Lest someone take me wrongly, I hasten to add

that my failure to finish the book in no way reflects on its read bhilty. In fact, it is innemealy resimble. It is also hopelessly shallow, poorly characterized, and written in prose not far removed from loke and jane. But, then, no book is perfect. Nevertheless, as its popularity would seen to indicate, it has a certain appeal. Jakee' historical semse is flawless; the book smacks of long hours of loving research. He tosses out names like Ben Franklin and Saunal Adams with happy sploobly surprisingly, it works. The book is virtually a juventle, sophistication—size, but it's fum.

The mainstream novels of Dean Koontz are almost a genre unto themselves; they deserve—and will get—the better part of a future column. For are the four aforementioned af writers the only ones to produce animuteam work. Ben Bova has done it with a novel called <u>The Multiple Man</u>, solenne fictional in content, but clearly almed at the larger multimost novel called the Sunning of the Beasts, written in collaboration with only of the Beasts, written in collaboration with Mill Promisin.

But more about that next time.

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